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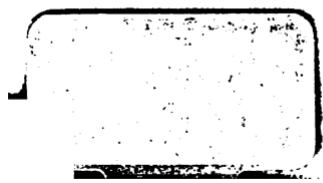
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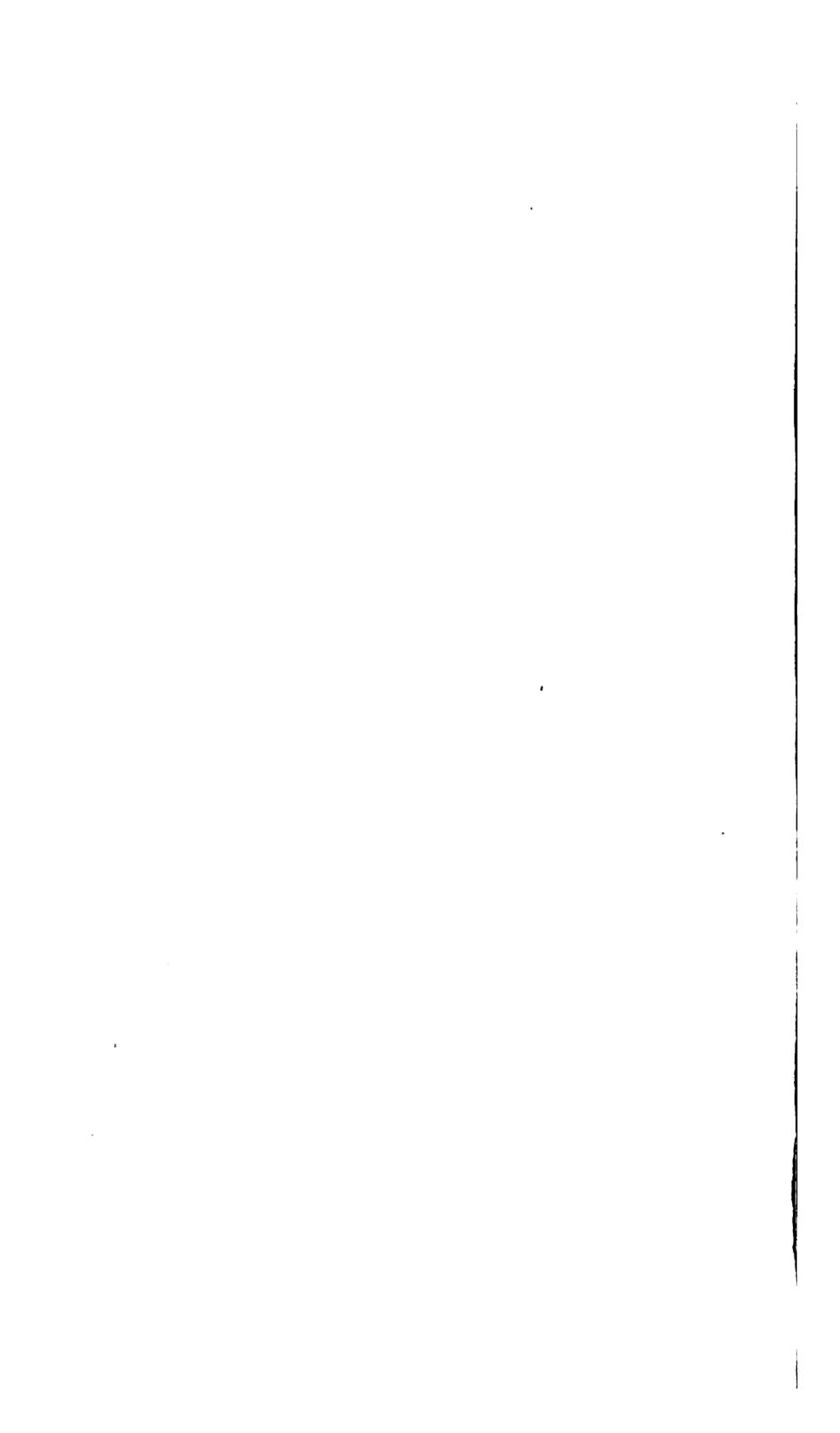
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PRIVATE MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT OF LOUIS XVIII.

VOL. I.

DHK

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PRIVATE MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT OF LOUIS XVIII,

BY A LADY.

E. L. Lamotte-Haagon

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,
NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1830.

my



MISS M. W.
TILDEN
1895

PREFACE OF THE EDITOR.

If opportunities of penetrating into the most private recesses of a court and exhibiting the actions, the words, nay almost the very thoughts, of the individuals belonging to it, from the highest personage in the state to the lowest of his servants—if an acquaintance with all the leading characters of the times, and a happy talent for sketching them with all their peculiarities—if a profusion of anecdotes of the most *piquant* interest, collected from such resources, and narrated in a lively style, and in unstudied language—be recommendations in the writer of a work of this nature, it may be safely asserted that these *Mémoirs* possess strong claims to the public attention. Relating to that eventful period which immediate-

ly preceded and followed the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of France, after an exile of more than twenty years, and purporting to proceed from the pen of a lady distinguished by the particular intimacy of Louis XVIII, they lay open the secret intrigues of the most intriguing capital in Europe during the time which they embrace, and exhibit a striking instance of the hollow insincerity, with which the most important political services are but too often requited. Almost every person of note in France since the downfal of Bonaparte is here portrayed; and if the national vanity has caused the Authoress to caricature the features of the illustrious of other countries, as may be seen for example in her delineation of that British Commander, who dissolved the boasted charm of French invincibility, still it cannot be denied that the generality of these pictures are touched off with a playfulness of fancy, an acuteness of observation, and a spirit of satire, which impart to them a more than ordinary degree of attraction.

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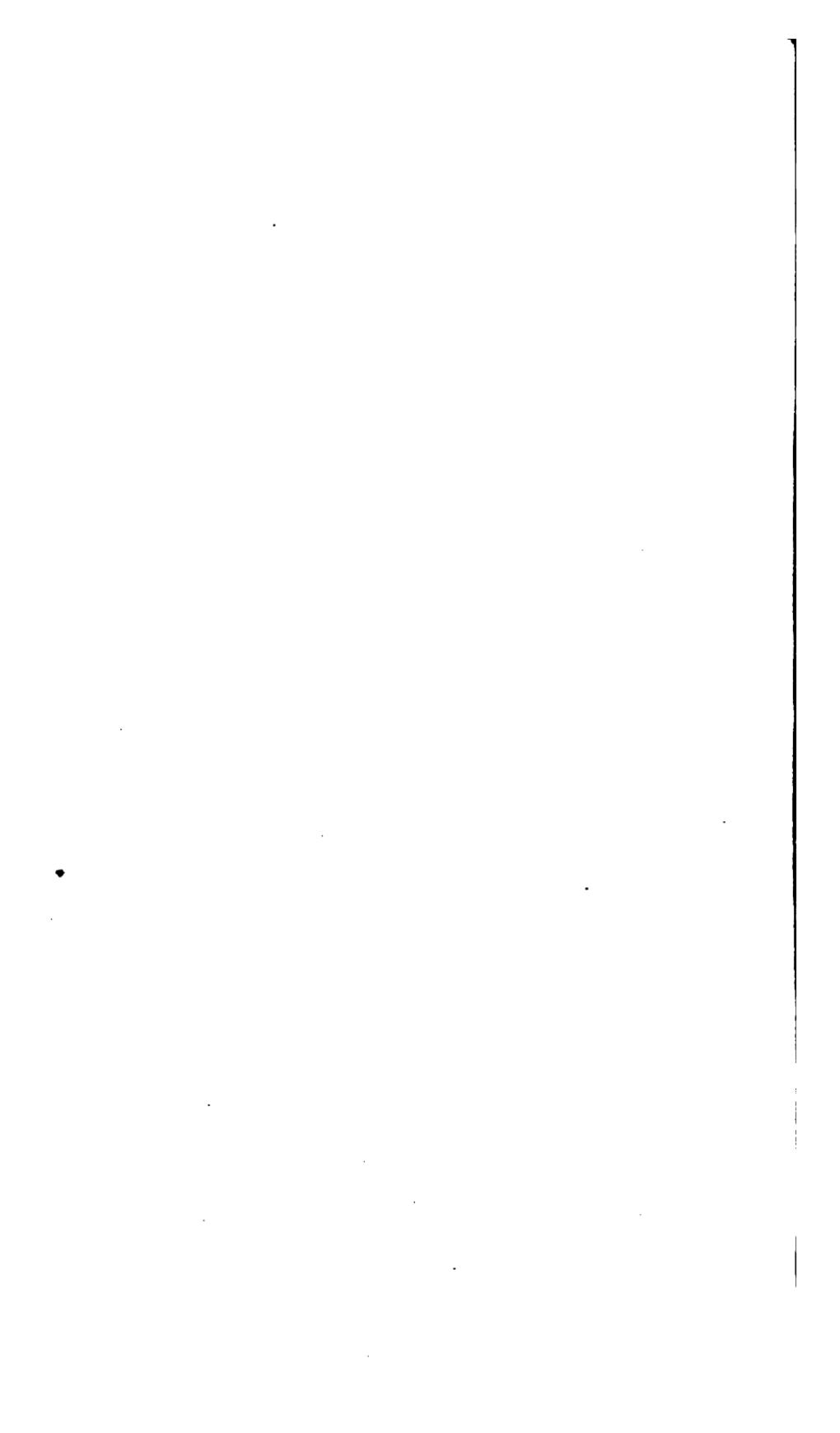
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M E M O I R S

OF THE

COURT OF LOUIS XVIII.

C H A P T E R I.

Reason for writing these Memoirs.—1789.—First emigration.—The Polignacs.—Emblems.—Conversation of my father with Monsieur, and with the Queen.—Bertrand de Moleville.—Letter from Monsieur to my father.—Madame de Balbi.—Death of my mother.

AFTER having read all the memoirs that have appeared during the last fifteen years, and that is saying a great deal, I shall indulge the whim or the vanity of writing mine. Enjoying from my situation excellent opportunities for seeing and hearing, I have seen and heard a great deal. Now that I am approaching the age when it will be proper to step aside a little, and when I must make up my mind to let younger persons than my-

self receive all the homage which was paid to my youth alone, it shall be my consolation to retrace at least my steps in that past, when, an amiable and tolerably good woman, as they say, I have loved and could inspire love ; when, intelligent, active, and perhaps somewhat ambitious, I have sometimes performed a part in our political vicissitudes. I have been much talked of on various occasions ; it is high time that I should say something about myself, in my turn, before I am totally forgotten. As for those whom my indiscretion is about to bring upon the stage, I shall endeavour not to give them reason to complain of me ; but, in the language of Corregio, “ I too am a painter ; ” and I will avail myself of the privilege to make my portraits likenesses. With regard to the facts themselves, I write for history : it is my duty to tell the truth, the truth such as I have seen or such as I know it. I promise myself, however, to preserve a due medium between the reserve of an old devotee who keeps back half of her revelations for her confessor, and the naked frankness of a writer who conceives, that in order to interest the public, recourse must be had to scandal. I hope to please, because I was a woman before I became an

historian, but I aspire also to instruct, and I can do it, for nobody is better qualified than I am to furnish a key to many political enigmas, to expose the petty causes of the most important acts, and lastly to state the why and the wherefore of all that has been done since the restoration.

I shall embrace in my narrative a space of about sixteen years, from 1814 to 1829. I shall nevertheless, commence my history a little further back, by way of presenting my credentials to my readers ; for it is right that they should all know whence I come and who I am.

Who I am ? No, not exactly—there is no need for that ; they shall know to what family I belong and my social position, but beyond these points—nothing. I am determined, nay, it is my duty to suppress my name. They may be satisfied about the rest. If I am not recognised they will lose nothing by my incognito ; on the contrary, it will be more convenient to me, writing, as it were invisibly, to tell what I know of every body, and even of my intimate associates. If my friends had been apprized of my intention to write my Memoirs, they would all have

been thronging to me, to solicit a little complimentary article in order to obtain by it an immortality which would have lasted as long as my work. Who knows even but what my *marchande de modes* might have begged me to slip in her address to the public? Such things have happened oftener than once. These will, I trust be deemed sufficient reasons for concealing my name. But this preamble is long enough in all conscience; let me begin.

I was born on the 11th of January 1789. This is the first confession I have to make, and perhaps not the least painful; after all, why should I conceal my age, if I am not yet forty? My birth mortified my parents: they wished for a second boy, that they might make a bishop of him. Of what utility could a daughter be to them, though she were to become an abbess? To punish me therefore for my sex, which disappointed all the hopes of the house, it was solemnly decreed that I should be ugly; luckily for me this dreadful sentence was not confirmed. As I grew up I became handsome, and at last turned out a beauty. My flatterers repeat this to me morning and evening; my mirror, which is no flatterer, induces me to believe it. In this

respect, therefore, I am still well enough ; but I have been better : it is painful to be falling off !

The year of grace 1789 was not over-favourable to the castle-building speculations of my family. The philosophers had paid court to the great with such effect, that the great had suffered the philosophers to say what they pleased : several high personages had even taken up the trade of philosophers ; this was a new way of bearding power. Be this as it may, the nation, agitated by the philosophers, demanded a general reform, or to speak more correctly a complete overthrow. The people complained that the nobles alone obtained the high dignities in the church ; that the nobles alone could thenceforward aspire to the rank of officers in the army, according to the decision of Marshal Segur ; they complained also that the nobles, not satisfied with all these advantages, would fain have secured for themselves exclusively the high appointments in the parliamentary magistracy. Tired of all these usurpations, the nation had placed its last hope on the states general.

At the news of their convocation the nobility trembled. They saw clearly that they had

no longer to deal with theory and philosophic reveries. It was a war against abuses ; the stake to be played for was all they possessed. The Duke de Coigny, who received from the royal exchequer at least a million (livres) per annum ; the Polignacs, whose salaries, gratuities, and pensions, amounted to as large a sum ; the Duchess de Grammont, who had an annuity of one hundred and fifty thousand livres ; my father himself, who enjoyed a secret pension of eighty thousand ; in short, all our relatives, all our friends, were terror-struck at the sight of that demon of economy with which the states general were possessed.

The states opened on the 5th of May, about four months after I was born. It would be superfluous to describe that ceremony ; I shall merely observe that the oath of the Tennis Court and the royal sitting gave my father a foreboding of the events of the 5th and 6th of October, which were the sequel to, or, as they are now called, the consequences of them.

Monseigneur the Count d'Artois had quitted France so early as the 15th of July. His enemies knew that this noble prince would always advise his brother not to make any concession to the national assembly, and they

were so well acquainted with his firmness and courage, as to be persuaded that on the first occasion he would support his advice with the sword. They produced such an effect by the calumnies which they spread respecting him, that the king, queen, and Monsieur, were obliged to entreat their brother to withdraw for a time from the hatred of the factious. His royal highness set out shuddering and sought an asylum at the court of Turin.

The Dukes of Angoulême and Berry went with him ; after these princes, the three Condés and the Prince of Conti left the country. Some privileged families, who had, no doubt, a great share in the then prevailing calamities, escaped in their retinue ; at the head of these families must be placed that of the Polignacs, who were not less alarmed ; and in truth they had reason to be so : according to some jealous courtiers, they deserved, perhaps, all the reproaches of prudent persons and the indignation of the people.

My father has told me a hundred times, that all the misfortunes of the queen proceeded from her attachment to Madame de Polignac. This lady was very handsome, very good-tempered, very agreeable ; but she was not the friend that Marie Antoinette needed in the

critical circumstances in which she was placed. She was surrounded by relatives without the least genius, without the least capacity, who mistook their ambition for talents and their pretensions for rights. The duchess and her kindred were poor; it was expected that all of them should be enriched. Their greediness was a bottomless abyss, in which for ten or twelve years the treasures of France were engulfed. There had never been, even during the reign of Louis XV, an instance of such dilapidation. Such was nearly the language held at Versailles itself concerning the Polignacs. The family of the Polignacs quitted Versailles with Messieurs de Coigny, de Lambesc, de Bezenval, de Vaudreuil, and the whole troop of favourites.

My father disapproved this step. "Let the women run away," said he, "if they please; but their fathers, their brothers, their husbands, their sons, ought to remain. It is our duty to rally round the throne; if the king needs the assistance of foreigners, one ambassador is sufficient; he does not want a thousand."

My father talked to no purpose; he was not attended to: people strove who should be the first to abandon Louis XVI, his wife,

and his children. The nobility who were alarmed emigrated ; the commoners, who chose to ape the nobles, emigrated ; the artisans, that they might not lose their customers, emigrated ; there was a mania, a rage for emigration ; in France nothing was to be seen but persons emigrating, and abroad nothing but persons who had emigrated.

This was not all : those gentlemen who had fled like affrighted children, some in full dress as if going to a ball, others in pumps as if about to call upon a neighbour, took it into their heads to taunt the faithful servants of the king who remained at their post. Employing symbols, after the manner of the Scythians, they sent them a distaff and bobbins. My father having received this present from the Viscount de C..., the greatest poltroon of France, sent him in return, a pair of wings and a whip, reproaching him by this emblem with the dependence to which the emigrants were reduced abroad.

Monsieur said to my father : “ Will you not emigrate ?”

“ No, Monseigneur. Honour is where the king is. I shall not leave Paris.”

“ You will accompany us, however, if we go with my brother to solicit powerful aid ?”

“ I will follow the king to the extremities of the earth ; but I should think it a crime to go before him.”

My father’s answers pleased Monsieur ; and from that moment he placed the utmost confidence in him.

My father went almost every day to pay his respects to the king and queen, who could appreciate his attachment. On one occasion, when he warmly solicited Marie Antoinette to approve a plan of flight which he proposed, she refused, saying : “ I should need a trusty female about me to assist me, and I am alone. They have all forsaken me ; their fear has been stronger than their attachment.” My father conceived that the queen alluded to the ladies of her private society, and perhaps, solely to the Duchess de Polignac. He thought that he might venture to answer : “ But, Madam, I imagined that she whom you honoured with the title of your friend, did not leave France but at your urgent solicitation.”—“ That is true,” replied the queen, “ I urged her to go ; but she was so desirous of going, and so afraid to stay ! Had I been in her place I should have staid ; indeed, I experienced her friendship only during my prosperity, when I had

no need of it. The moment I wanted her she forsook me. Nevertheless I assure you that I loved her sincerely, and she, on her part, never ceased protesting to me her ardent attachment." At the concluding words the beautiful eyes of Marie Antoinette filled with tears: in spite of the efforts which she made to repress them, my father perceived that her generous heart was deeply wounded by the desertion of her friend. Fearful of aggravating the sorrows of the queen he dropped the conversation.

The king and queen at length set out. My parents were not in the secret of their flight; as soon as they heard of it they prepared also to depart; but all at once they received tidings of the apprehension of the august family. This intelligence overwhelmed them with despair. My father, as soon as he had obtained permission, hastened to lay at the feet of the king and queen the assurances of his devoted attachment. He found Marie Antoinette embittered by misfortune, and suspecting those about her of intentions which probably they did not entertain. "I see clearly what they are doing for themselves," said she, "but I cannot see what they are doing for the king." As for Louis XVI, he was deeply

grieved that neither party appeared disposed to abide honestly by the constitution which he had given. The nation conceived that the throne had not made concessions enough ; the nobility that it had made too many. The king alone was sincerely attached to that constitution which had taken away so much of his power.

There was at this time at the palace a man whose fellow would not have been found at any other court in Europe : this was M. Bertrand de Moleville, who, having been minister for a moment, fancied himself on this account to be volume the second of the famous Cardinal Richelieu. Never was there seen greater presumption coupled with a greater lack of brains. The poor man imagined that the revolutionary torrent might be stemmed with half a dozen pamphlets ; and he gravely proposed his means of counter-revolution to my father, who shrugged his shoulders. M. Bertrand de Moleville, however, was not the only person who held this opinion : there was another facetious writer a certain M. de Fonvielle, knight of the order of the golden spur, of whom I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

My father was not pleased at the secret

which Monsieur had made of his departure, and one of our relatives being then emigrating, my father gave him a letter for the Count de Provence, in which he frankly complained of the want of confidence which his royal highness had shewn towards him. Several months elapsed, and no answer arrived; at length one fine morning the queen sent for my father. "I am commissioned," said she, "to deliver to you this packet which comes from Monsieur. You are in correspondence with him then?" The queen put this question with an air of distrust which vexed my father. "I have written to his royal highness," he hastily replied, "to complain of the silence which he kept towards me at the moment of his departure. I have long proved myself his faithful servant, and I conceived that I had some right to be admitted into his confidence." This explanation satisfied the queen. Though Monsieur's letter contained nothing political, I think it right to transcribe it.

"You are angry with me then, my dear —, because I did not tell you every thing. But could I in conscience tell you every thing? Was my brother's and sister's secret mine? You see, by the melancholy failure of their

flight, how important discretion was in this affair. I have succeeded, it is true, in withdrawing myself from the hands of the gentlemen of the national assembly, but I might not have succeeded; and then, from your friendship for me, I have no doubt that you would have been a hundred times as distressed at my misfortune as you have been at my silence.

“ Do not suppose that the life I am leading here is very agreeable. The Germans are honest fellows, but they tire one to death. Wit is not in fashion with them: they are fond of nothing but erudition and wine, and these two things they smell a league off. What melancholy reflexions this species of exile causes me to make! It seems as if, in leaving France, I left behind with my happiness part of myself, that is to say, my tastes, my sentiments, my studies. I have a right to exclaim with Horace :

Patria quis exul
Se quoque fugit.

“ I would fain chat with you the whole day, but I am obliged to break off. You cannot imagine all the business with which I am overwhelmed in this country. Here are plans

of counter-revolution, and applications for relief; I am solicited on one side, threatened on the other: I know not to whom to listen. Add to this an immense correspondence, two councils a day, my life to regulate, that of others to conduct, audiences, visits, speeches, answers, and you will see from all this that I must love you to be able to find time amidst this whirlpool of business to write to you.

“ If you come to us, for come you must at last, rely upon me, and try to arrange matters so that *they* may follow you. This would be a grand stroke. If we were all together we would shout upon the house-tops, and make ourselves be heard at a greater distance.

“ Adieu. Here are three persons who love you dearly; myself in the first place, d’Avaray in the second; you may guess the third.

“ I am” &c.

This third person, whom Monsieur left my father to guess, was his intimate friend, Madame de Balbi. At least the Count de Provence believed in the attachment of this lady at the period in question; he was subsequently undeceived. Madame de Balbi was not deficient in cleverness, but she was eaten up by an insatiable ambition: she

wished to direct every thing, to do every thing. I knew her before and since 1814, and I dare say I shall have more than one occasion to mention her in the course of these Memoirs. In 1789 she was all-powerful with Monsieur, whom she led into numerous faults. The error of the Count de Provence was to expect to manage men in a revolution as they were managed at Versailles in 1790, with *lettres de cachet*. This, to be sure, was the error of the whole court. The Jacobins were treated as the courtiers with red heels had previously been. To this error was owing the downfall of the monarchy.

Matters continued to grow worse and worse. It was decreed that the king should not escape from the fatal circle which was daily becoming more and more contracted around him. The 20th of June and the 10th of August 1792, announced the still greater calamities that were to follow. During those two dreadful days my father never quitted the palace. By the special favour of Providence he nevertheless escaped the fury of the banditti. My mother, who was then languishing under a very dangerous disease, conjured her husband to leave France. He was inflexible. "So long as the king lives," replied

he, "I will remain at Paris. If he is murdered I shall then see what is to be done. Till then I shall not forsake either my master or you."

Alas ! it was my mother who was destined to leave us first. The melancholy events in August and in the September following deprived her of the small remnant of strength and life. I still recollect the circumstances attending her last moments, perhaps because they have been often related to me. "My poor Olympia," said she, taking me in her arms, "what will become of thee?" No sooner had she finished these words than she expired. It was natural enough that she should be alarmed on account of the situation in which she left me. Scarcely four years of age, I had now nobody but my father, who, resting on his broken sword, gazed with a look of consternation at the coffin of his wife and the prison of his king.

CHAPTER II.

The Marquis de Pontecoulant.—Danger incurred by my father.—**Madame Montbrun.**—My father and General Dumouriez.—Death of the King.—We emigrate.—**Mon-sieur at Coblenz.**—The emigrants.—We proceed to Italy.—Permission of residence.—General Lannes.—Visit to Bonaparte.—The conversation.

THERE were a score of attempts made for the deliverance of the royal family confined in the Temple. None of them was crowned with success. My father, as it might be supposed, had a hand in all these honourable plots. One morning, he was breakfasting at a coffee-house in the Rue du Mail, when the Marquis de Pontecoulant, a member of the national convention and his intimate friend, though much younger than himself, entered and stepping up to my father: “ You cannot go home again,” said he; “ your house is surrounded: your destruction is decreed. Vergniaud has told me every thing that I might warn you of your danger. I have been seeking you this hour; your nurse-maid informed me that I should find you here. You must

go ; you must leave France ; you will not be safe on this side of the Rhine." With these words M. de Pontecoulant put into my father's hand a hundred louis, took leave of him, and retired.

M. de Pontecoulant had been page to the king, and had distinguished himself at an early age by an excellent understanding and sound judgment. As sub-lieutenant of the life-guards, he had the prospect of a brilliant career before him, when the revolution opened for him a new one, in which he acquitted himself without stigma, though he then found himself in the most delicate situation. I wish he had not separated from the nobility, but his constitutional ideas called him to the new order of things. He will be brought forward again in these Memoirs, and I shall then speak of him as I ought to do and as he deserves.

My father, surprised at the appearance and the communication of M. de Pontecoulant, was fixed motionless to the spot. A thousand different thoughts crowded upon his mind. Anxiety for his preservation enjoined him to flee ; but the imperative voice of honour commanded him to stay. He had promised the king not to abandon him ; and he was too

much the gentleman to believe that his own personal danger released him from this engagement. It was moreover painful to him to leave me; and lastly he intended, if he should subsequently be obliged to emigrate, to take with him my brother, who was then thirteen years old, and would soon be able to share with him the danger and the glory of a necessary emigration.

From all these considerations my father resolved to remain. He did not return home; that would have been running wilfully into destruction. He directed his course to the Marais; there, in the Rue St. François, lived a woman who was still handsome and to whom he had been attached. My poor father, I must confess, had not only the attachment to monarchy and the noble manners of the gentry of the olden time but also their morals. He had married his former mistress to a serjeant in the French guards, who had left her a widow. My father was no longer her lover, but he continued to see her now and then as a mere acquaintance, and he had too good an opinion of her to believe that she was capable of betraying him.

The moment my father entered, Madame Monbrun—that was the name of this female

—guessed from the alteration in his looks what had happened. My father told her all without reserve. “You shall stay with me,” said the good creature; “you shall pass for my husband’s brother, who is coming from Nimes to arrange with me respecting the property left by the deceased. I expect my brother-in-law next week, but it will be easy for us to adjust that matter.” It may readily be conceived with what pleasure my father accepted this offer.

Meanwhile what were we to do at home? we had been put under sequestration; all our servants, excepting the nurse who took care of us, were sent away. My brother, who, on account of his delicate complexion appeared to be much younger than he really was, gave no cause for apprehension. Besides, the ruling powers had not then arrived at that refinement in barbarity which they subsequently attained. The man in whose custody we were placed, and who was a shoemaker in the neighbourhood, took up his quarters in the porter’s lodge, which he turned into his shop. My father had been absent from home for twenty-four hours; not knowing what had become of him, and dreading some misfortune from what had occurred at

the hotel, my nurse the faithful Justine, and my brother wept, and I cried too, because I heard them say that somebody wanted to hurt my papa. We were all in tears when a woman made her appearance. This was Madame Montbrun. My father had given her a bill for five louis, dated back, so as to fall due that day; and Madame Montbrun came to the hotel upon pretext of presenting it for payment. She saw us, caressed us, cheered us respecting the state of our father, and departed.

My father, satisfied, on his part, relative to the lot of his children, was not equally so respecting the situation of his royal master. That atrocious trial had already commenced: it was easy to foresee the dreadful end of an imprisoned king. The factious, who knew not all the goodness and clemency that the heart of Louis XVI contained, were well aware that in general when any attack is made upon power, it is dangerous to stop short. One way only of saving the king now presented itself; my father resolved to attempt it at all hazards.

General Dumouriez had just come to Paris, as he alleged, to consult the convention upon a plan for the ensuing campaign, but in rea-

lity, as he has stated in his Memoirs, to devise means for saving Louis XVI, who had already been put upon his trial. My father had often seen this officer before the revolution, and he knew that he possessed not less talent than ambition. Flattering himself that he might be able to draw him over to the service of the most sacred cause, he called upon him one morning in disguise, and having asked to speak to him in the name of the first member of the convention that came into his head, he was introduced to General Dumouriez.

The general did not at first know my father on account of his disguise, but no sooner had he mentioned his name than Dumouriez exclaimed : " What are you doing at Paris ? your place is at Coblenz. You risk your life by staying here any longer."

" My life is nothing," replied my father ; " but the king's ?"

" Ah, the king ! he has committed a great many faults."

" Perhaps so, but not enough, I hope, to deserve death."

" That is not my notion ; God knows that I would do any thing to save him ; but how is he to be extricated from the abyss into which he has fallen ?

“ General, you must have influence, friends, partisans. The king has not lost all his ; and perhaps, if we were to unite, we might succeed in carrying him off from the Temple.”

“ And then ?”

“ We would replace him on his throne.”

“ That is impossible ; the people are tired of royalty : they want something else, a consul for life, a dictator, or what not.”

“ Why should the people dislike their old sovereign ? where would they find a better than Louis XVI ?”

“ That is true ; Louis XVI is a good man, but he is not fit to reign.”

“ Is he to die then ?”

“ For my part, I would do any thing for him ; but you, on your side, what are your resources ?”

My father then told the general in what manner he had planned, with the assistance of other devoted servants, to save Louis XVI. He named several of his friends, and among others the Chevalier d'Antibes.

No sooner had he pronounced this name than Dumouriez burst into a loud laugh.

“ Ah, yes,” said he, “ the modern Blondel, a man who would pass all his life in singing : *O Richard ! O mon Roi !* but if all your friends

are of this stamp, there is no hope for Louis XVI. These men without energy cannot serve my purposes, either near at hand or at a distance. Depend upon it the best thing you can do is to leave me to steer the vessel alone. It will even be prudent not to see one another again : the police must be on the look-out for you ; if they knew that you come hither we should both be ruined ; let us each do what we can separately for the king. Adieu."

It was in this manner that the general got rid of my father. He set out without attempting any thing in behalf of Louis XVI ; and a few days afterwards the head of the best of princes fell upon the scaffold. My heart is still oppressed whenever I think of this horrible crime.

All being then consummated, France became hateful to him, and he hastened to leave it. He did not wish his children to remain there, and my nurse engaged to take us out of the country with her. My father set out first, disguised as a government courier. He was supposed to be the bearer of dispatches for the conventionalists sent on a mission into the Netherlands ; seal, stamp, signatures, were all, it is said, wonderfully well imitated. They were the work of a writing-master, named Du-

molard, who exercised in acts of the greatest kindness a talent which is so often employed in the commission of crime.

My father combined perfect coolness with great courage. He avoided the dangers with which the road was beset, and when he approached a place where there were conventionists, a few louis judiciously applied induced a peasant to drive him beyond the frontier line, where he was safe. As for my brother and myself, our maid, who passed for our elder sister, going to join her brother in the army of the Rhine, took us first to Strasburg, and thence to my father. He carried us with him to Coblentz, where Monsieur then was. I could, upon his authority, relate all the intrigues which took place at that shadow of a court, but I omit them, solicitous to bring myself upon the stage, or rather to come to the narrative of the events in which I bore a part.

My father had flattered himself that he should obtain the confidence of Monsieur, then regent of France, in the name of Louis XVII, who was a prisoner in the Temple. My father had flattered himself in vain: he was not even treated so well as his attachment deserved. The grand complaint of having come too late

was preferred against him; he was allowed no credit for the blood which he had lost on the 10th of August. At Coblenz none could be considered as a good Frenchman who had not abandoned Louis XVI at the very first moment. The fugitives of 1789 were *the pure*; those of 1790 *loyal subjects*; those of 1791 *timid persons* who needed encouragement; those of 1792 *ungrateful people* to whom pardon might be granted; but, as for the emigrants of 1793, they were downright *traitors*, who deserved no mercy.

My father, perceiving that the faithful servants of the late king had nothing more to expect, turned soldier as he could not be a courtier. But, when Austrian perfidy had clearly demonstrated to the least sagacious that the cabinet of Vienna wished to dismember France and not to restore it to its former masters, my father could no longer resolve to bear arms against his country. He therefore resigned, and set out with me for Italy, where he purposed to take up his abode. My brother did not accompany us. One of the princes had taken him into his service, at first in the quality of page and afterwards as gentleman-cadet. His fortune underwent various vicissitudes. It was not till the year 1814 that we again

met at Paris after a separation of nearly twenty years. I shall have to speak of him when I come to that period.

Leghorn was the place to which my father intended to retire. So early as 1791, foreseeing part of the calamities which followed, he had placed in the hands of several merchants in Tuscany a sum of about two hundred thousand francs, accruing from the sale of his plate, my mother's diamonds, and a country-house which we had near Paris. These funds were sufficient for our subsistence. For their greater security my father thought of transferring them to the bank of England, which appeared to him to be the most solid of any in Europe; but his presence would have been necessary for that operation. We had an immense circuit to make to avoid falling in with the French armies: we went to Berlin, from Berlin to Vienna, and from Vienna to Trieste. There we embarked, and, on our arrival at Ancona, we proceeded to Tuscany. My father was barely in time to change the destination of his capital. Bonaparte was in Italy, and every thing turned topsy-turvy.

My father was acquainted with one of Bonaparte's officers. He wrote to him to inform him of his situation, telling him at the same

time that he had relinquished all active service as soon as he perceived the designs of the coalition. This officer, who afterwards acted a conspicuous part, returned the following answer: "I have communicated your letter to the general-in-chief, who desired me to tell you to change your name and place of residence and to keep quiet. He will never allow Frenchmen to be persecuted on account of their opinion, and he deems it his duty to protect all those who approach him and are submissive."

This note cheered my father. Agreeably to the advice that was given him he repaired to Pisa under an assumed name; there he passed several years in cultivating his garden and my youthful understanding. I grew, and grew handsomer: I had no need to consult my mirror to be sure of that; the looks of the young Italians, who ogled me on Sundays when I attended mass at the cathedral, told me quite enough. Sometimes too, when walking on the banks of the Arno, I heard the boatmen exclaim: *Mirate! mirate! quant' è bella questa ragazza*—"Look, look! what a beautiful girl!" The Italian is certainly the nightingale among modern languages, as a great poet has observed.

While we were at Pisa the fortune of war wavered between the two parties. The French, at first victorious in Italy, were driven out of it; but Bonaparte soon returned thither and victory along with him. My father, tired of living at a distance from his country, went to Milan to solicit permission to return to France. He applied this time to General Lannes, one of those brave men who, in the times of chivalry, would have been compared with Duquesclin, but whom it was then the fashion to call by the name of some Roman warrior or other.

My father having called upon him, Lannes, with good-natured bluntness, desired him to come again the next day, and he would introduce him to the first consul.

My father withdrew pleased at having gained a protector; and yet he could not help thinking with bitter regret, that if things had gone on in their regular course, it would have been his province to patronize the officer who had just spoken to him. Certain of being admitted to Bonaparte, he had now but to prepare himself for the interview. The high reputation which that general had already acquired, though still so young, intimidated him. He conceived too that he had to do

with a coarse man, for such were almost all the upstarts of that period. Apprehensive therefore of a refusal, he resolved to take me with him, in hopes that my youth would touch the heart of the fierce republican.

Foreigners had not yet made up their opinions respecting Bonaparte. They knew not whether he was labouring for his own benefit or on behalf of another; if, like Washington, he would consolidate the edifice of the republic; if, like Cromwell, he would usurp the supreme power; or if he would aspire to the glory of acting the part of a second Monk. The emigrants knew, for example, that he was not fond of shedding their blood, and that if he threatened them at times in his proclamations, he always sought the means of screening them from his own threats.

Precisely at the hour fixed by General Lannes we arrived at the palace of the government. As soon as we were known to be French, we were admitted without difficulty: the Italians did not enjoy such free admittance. We were not kept long waiting by General Lannes: he came, saluted my father, and took me by the hand, addressing to me some flattering observations on my beauty,

and ushered us into the closet of the first consul.

I cannot describe the kind of emotion which overpowered me as I advanced. For a long time I had heard nothing talked of but General Bonaparte, his victories, and his high destinies: he was already, as it were, the personification of the new French glory. What sort of man then was this General Bonaparte? My imagination figured him as a tall man at least six feet high, with a great sword by his side, and dressed in fine clothes all covered with gold lace. The reality fell far short of this representation: I found myself face to face with a man of low stature, very thin, very pale, and having straight hair hanging over his ears: no great sword, no fine clothes either, and those which he wore that day were even none of the cleanest. Never was disenchantment equal to mine. My eyes sought on all sides the person whom I had hoped to see, and I verily believe that if I had not been a little frightened I should have asked Bonaparte himself where was Bonaparte?

My father, who, no doubt had not cherished the same illusions as I had done, advanced towards the short thin man, making him a low

bqw. While General Lannes was telling who we were, Bonaparte with a couple of glances had scrutinized my father and me from head to foot. He kept silence for a few moments, then addressing my father, he said in a sharp tone : " So you are an emigrant ? "

" Yes, General."

" And of what period ? "

" Of the last."

" It is the best : but why did you leave so late ? "

" I had vowed to the king never to forsake him. I did not leave France till after his death."

" That is to say, you are a true royalist."

My father made no reply, Bonaparte resumed : " Such persons as you are dangerous in a republic. Yet, as they have honour, one may trust their promise : will you give me your word never to conspire against me or against the government that shall be established ? "

" I swear it by all that is most sacred."

" Are you returning without pecuniary resources ? " asked the first consul. " Do you need any money ? "

" No General, I am not so destitute as my companions in misfortune. By a foresight

which events have but too well justified, I had placed abroad a sum sufficient for my subsistence."

"Sir, rejoined the general, if you have any property left in France which has not been sold, call upon me and we will take measures for causing it to be restored to you." Then nodding towards me he said: "Is that your daughter?"

"Yes, General."

"She is very handsome."

This compliment reconciled me with Bonaparte, and I looked at him again, to see if I had not made a wrong estimate of him. He then asked: "Have you any other child?"

"I have a son."

"Why is he not with you?"

"He remained in the service of our princes."

"I hope, sir," resumed Bonaparte, knitting his brows, "that when you have made yourself acquainted with new France, you will bring back to it your son and your fortune."

"The one I will do, General, and I will try to do the other; that is all I can promise."

Here Bonaparte ended the conversation by telling my father to call the following day on M. de Bourrienne, his private secretary, who would give him a passport for Paris.

CHAPTER III.

M. de Bourrienne.—We return to Paris.—**Josephine.**—**Madame Campan.**—Murder of the Duke d'Enghien.—The Duke de Brancas.—The Marquis de Chimene.—Love intrigue at church.—The dinner.—The Duke de Levis.—Count d'Escherny.—Girodet.—Alisan de Chazet.—Sebastien Louis Mercier.—Dr. Alibert.—Sequel to my adventure with Charles.

M. FAUVELET DE BOURRIENNE was a man whom it is not very easy to define—at once a republican and an aristocrat, giving himself out for the descendant of a Fauvelet de Villemont, who lived in the sixteenth century, but more fortunate in having had Bonaparte for a schoolfellow at Brienne than in his contested four quarters of nobility. It was because this title of schoolfellow had really been his only recommendation to the general of the army of Italy, that **M. de Bourrienne** was so fond of recapitulating the successes of his childhood. Bonaparte has associated the names of his other favourites with some great battle or some important negociation; but the celebrity of **M. de Bourrienne** has been founded upon fights at school. Thus the secretary related

with extreme self-complacency and often repeated the story: "Young Bonaparte was a noted character at Brienne, but there were better scholars than he. When the Duke of Orleans and Madame de Montesson condescended to preside at the distribution of the prizes in 1783, Bonaparte had but one crown, which I even shared with him on the ground of equal merit; and I had six others to myself. At the seventh Madame de Montesson said to my mother: 'Madam, my hands are tired, take the trouble this time to crown your son yourself.' Had any one been then disposed to attach prognostics of greatness to the name of any of the scholars, it was not to Bonaparte that he would have predicted the most illustrious destinies of the nineteenth century." It would seem that Bonaparte, notwithstanding all his friendship for M. de Bourrienne, never considered him in any other light than as a pupil clever at school-themes; and the pupil never won any other crowns than those at the distribution of prizes*.

* M. de Bourrienne, on his part, was frequently astonished that it was possible to become emperor and yet sin against orthography. His astonishment reminds me of the old Cent-Suisse of Louis XV, who went to see that Bonaparte whose talents as a general were so highly extolled. "That a general!" said he, "why, when he walked, he did not step out with the right foot first.

At this period M. de Bourrienne, who had emigrated by accident, and been reinstated in his civil rights by Bonaparte, was rather proud of his title of secretary. It was not so easy to obtain access to him as to his master; the secretary had an ante-chamber, where we made a forced halt of an hour. At last we were admitted and M. de Bourrienne honoured us with an affable look. We had first to answer some questions of civility; they led to a conversation, in which the secretary took pains to prove to us that he was a clever man; he succeeded. Having played this part, he proceeded to the other, that of his administrative functions; and here he assumed all his dignity to impose upon us the most frivolous, tiresome, and ridiculous of interrogatories. You would have supposed that the welfare of the republic depended upon our passport, which, however, was finally delivered to us in due form. The amiable man then resumed the ascendancy; but my father, being somewhat vexed, then became rather laconic in his answers, and we withdrew.

On the following day my father took leave of Bonaparte by letter, and we went to bid farewell to the brave General Lannes. He

had rendered us a signal service but appeared to attach no importance to it; he merely said to my father: "Recollect what the first consul promised you relative to your property, and if he forgets, come to me, and I will undertake to refresh his memory. On the other hand, keep yourself quiet; be sure to do that: henceforward nobody will be suffered to be a royalist on our side of the Rhine." My father repeated his protestations and his thanks, and set out full speed, so impatient was he to return to his native soil.

We arrived at Paris on the 1st of August 1800. The first consul, who had left Italy after us, arrived in France before we did, because on my account we had made short days' journeys. We found here but a small number of the friends of our family; by degrees, however, the emigrants all returned, the gates of France having been thrown open to them. Great part of my father's property had been sold, but his hotel was not, neither was a considerable forest. He lost no time in claiming these through the medium of General Lannes. This business called him several times to the Tuilleries, whither he could not go so often without desiring to be presented to Madame Bonaparte. This lady, whom we had known

shortly before the revolution, invited my father to dinner; he accepted the invitation, and it was to his interest that he did.

Josephine—I love to call the wife of Bonaparte by this name—Josephine was adored by all who approached her. And who could have denied her their homage? She was so graceful, so noble, so beautiful! Yet all this was what you admired least when you beheld her. Never had any one a more amiable disposition, more enchanting manners, a more angelic temper. Her innocent fondness for botany and her enlightened taste for the fine arts are well known. Her heart was worthy of her understanding. She possessed, as it were, an instinct of benevolence which no obstacle could check; no affliction however severe could baffle her; the ingenuity of her kindness always found means of consoling. I may be told perhaps that Josephine had her weak side too; that she was capricious, coquettish, fond of frivolity, of fashion: this is true; she was a woman.

Josephine desired to see me; I was presented to her. She thought me charming. She inquired who superintended my education? My father answered that he educated me at home. “That is not right,” said she; “made-

maiselle must go to Madame Campan's school. I will take upon me the expense till her marriage." The word *marriage* made me redden even to the white of the eyes: that word has in it something so singular for a girl of twelve!

My father did not accept the favour that was offered him. He replied that, alone as he was, and accustomed to my company ever since his emigration, he could not make up his mind to part from me. This, however, was not the real cause of his refusal: the reason was, the bad opinion which he entertained of Madame Campan. He knew the heavy reproaches which the late queen had addressed to that person, on whom he could never have bestowed the confidence which a father owes to the instructress of his daughter. After what was told me by my father, I was not little surprised to see published under the name of Madame Campan, *exculpatory* Memoirs, if I may be allowed the expression, of Marie Antoinette. I shall remark, by the way, that these Memoirs have been published since the return of the Bourbons.

After this refusal, we found Josephine grow gradually cooler towards us. She no longer treated us as she had done. My father gave himself no uneasiness on that account. He

returned to his obscurity, and when, soon afterwards, Bonaparte, before he laid his hands on the crown of St. Louis, imbrued them in the blood of a Bourbon, this crime wholly extinguished the species of attachment which my father had felt for him. I alluded to the atrocious murder of the Duke d'Enghien, whose corpse the future emperor thus threw as a last prey to that revolution, which he was about to muzzle for ever at his feet.

This impolitic crime was one of the events that have struck me most powerfully during my life; I have still as vivid a recollection of it as if it had happened but yesterday. I was then a little turned of sixteen; I was entering the period of adolescence, and the impressions of that age are not easily effaced. The illegal apprehension and unjust condemnation of the Duke d'Enghien excited universal horror. Napoleon derived no benefit from them: all his glory has not sufficed to wipe away such a crime. France gradually became silent: but, in the critical days of the empire, that blood, invoked by the eloquence of M. de Chateaubriand, pleaded against the conqueror of Europe. But to return to myself.

I have now come to the moment when I have

my first private secrets to communicate : still I shall not forget the respect and reserve that I owe to my family. Solicitous to reconcile what truth requires with what we term the decorum of life, I shall thicken the triple veil in which I wrapped myself, for the purpose of more effectually concealing my name and my arms : after that, let those recognize me who can. But, before I commence the narrative of my first fault, it may not be amiss to relate how I was led into evil. My excuse will perhaps gain me the indulgence of my readers, and I have need of indulgence.

My father, as I have observed, had met with some of his former friends at Paris, and he had renewed his intimacy with them. Of this number were the Marquis de Chimene, and the Count de Lauraguais, who had become Duke de Brancas, but a duke without a duchy, because there was none left for the ancient title. These two personages were inseparable : it will be seen presently why.

The Count de Lauraguais had formerly been noted for his amiableness, and he was still amiable enough to keep up his ancient reputation. He disliked the present system. Nobody now talked of Mademoiselle Arnoult, his old mistress ; nobody now made little ma-

drigals, little malicious couplets, little *bouquets à Chloris*; there was now not a single witticism to laugh at: such an age could not possibly please him. He therefore grumbled bitterly against it, and in his wrath, occasionally launched very pretty epigrams against the times, which cared nothing about them.

The Marquis de Chimene, his companion, though possessing less wit, had not more reason. A dramatic author, he would have circumscribed the universe within the compass of the *Comédie Française*. He could see nothing on this side of that, nothing beyond it. He had formerly written two or three tragedies which were hissed, and he fancied that Fame's hundred mouths ought to be entirely engrossed with his tragic glory. But alas! people talked of provinces, of kingdoms conquered, of great captains, of extraordinary political events, and not a word of the Marquis de Chimene. The poor marquis ought to have died thirty years earlier with his plays: he would then have gone in useful time.

These two great wrecks of a former age had but one way of consoling each other, and that was by calling up recollections of the *ancien régime*. With what delight did I then listen to their moral and instructive conversation!

How I opened my ears to the rather luscious tales of their affairs of gallantry, I shall never forget how, on one occasion, the Marquis de Chimene, wishing to fix a date which he did not precisely remember, turned to the Duke de Lauraguais, saying: "It was the very year that I paid court to your wife."—"Right!" replied the other, with a coolness which terrified me, "it was in 1776." This seemed perfectly natural to those two gentlemen; the one felt no vanity on the subject and the other no ill will.

It must be confessed that all these conversations about the days of yore were not calculated to inspire me with prudence. I verily believe that it had been better for me to have been placed at Madame Campan's than to have been thus brought up at home. Add to this, that my education was entirely left to Madame Charlet; this was the new name of our Justine, who, though a good woman in other respects, permitted me to read all the novels that fell into my hands, though she guarded my virtue with all the severity of a Spanish duenna. Let it not be forgotten, at the same time, that I was past sixteen; then let those condemn me that dare.

I went regularly every Sunday, with Ma-

dame Charlet, to mass at the church of St. Thomas Aquinas. While she was most devoutly engaged in pious meditations, I was gazing round me on all sides with eyes any thing but devout. One Sunday, looking about me as usual, I suddenly perceived, at the distance of twenty paces, a young man, who seemed to have been spying at me with his glass for some time. He was well shaped ; his features regular ; his face pale ; his eyes !—his eyes which were fixed upon me, were charming ; and above all, he had the handsomest mustaches in the world. Mustaches ! then he was a soldier. My father had been a soldier ; my brother was a soldier ; it was my duty not to hate soldiers. Besides, we attach to that profession ideas of courage and glory which singularly delighted my heart at sixteen. The following Sunday, the same young man was in the same place, looking at me as before. He had come thither on my account, of that there could be no doubt ; I had no doubt of it, but still I wished to be sure. I would have given any thing in the world to hear him say to me : It was for your sake that I came hither. This confession will make all the noble ladies cry out aloud ; they will protest that never did a girl of good family feel her heart throb before

marriage. For my part, I could only answer them by proving, documents in hand, that my pedigree is regular. But alas ! I do not consider myself as an exception ; and to confirm what I advance, I might certainly relate the first love-affairs of this, or the other person ;— but no, that would be wrong. I must not imitate the Countess de Genlis, who in her Memoirs has confessed every body's sins but her own.

Be this as it may, the handsome young man of St. Thomas Aquinas continued faithful to the church and to me. He even followed me, and I turned my head, blushing at the same time, to look at him. It was not long before I began to see him every where, even where he was not. I thought of him when I was with my father ; when I was alone in my room I thought of him ; at night, instead of sleeping, I thought of him ; and if I closed my eyes, my waking thoughts obtruded themselves upon my slumbers. I saw him at all times, and in all places, at my side, in the dress in which I had first beheld him : it was a green frock coat ; I shall not forget it as long as I live.

One morning, at breakfast, my father said to me : “ I have just hired a new servant. I

think he will suit: at any rate, I shall give him a trial." What did I care about a servant! alas! little did I know how deeply this one was to interest me! The dinner hour arrived, and we seated ourselves at the table. We had several guests that day. As they are well known personages I shall beg leave to make a little digression for the purpose of sketching their portraits.

The first whom I shall name, for rank deserves precedence, was the Duke de Levis. In regard to his nobility, my readers may perhaps have seen the picture representing Noah saving in the ark a packet labelled: *Papers of the Levis family*. His personal titles to Parnassus are more disputable: his wit has *bon ton*, but no vivacity; his style a certain elegance, but no colouring; his *maxims* have been almost successful: he fancies himself profound because he digs to a great depth for trivial thoughts. He is at best the Dorat of philosophy. As a politician, M. de Levis was of little note in the national assembly, of which he was a member, and having returned to France after the 18th Brumaire, he lived, like us, in expectation of events. I shall fall in with him again by and by, and then I shall have a crow to pluck with him.

I must next mention Count d'Escherny, chamberlain to the grand-duke, or rather to the king of Wurtemberg. M. d'Escherny was a philosopher and preached equality: but he was a gentleman and wished to be treated accordingly. He had known Voltaire, and did not believe in God; he had been the friend of Rousseau, and affected lofty sentiments. As he was passionately fond of music, he imagined that he was a musician. In other respects he was a very amiable, almost coquetish, old man, who would not have been a bad story-teller, had he not made his stories so long.

Our guests were not all noblemen; we had also men of talent: in the first place, Girodet, who, with his bristling hair, his hollow eyes, and his sallow complexion, might have personified Envy. Fortunately he was less jealous of his contemporaries than of his predecessors. He wrote verses because Michael Angelo had done so; but Girodet was not a poet except when the pencil was in his hand. Had he not wasted his time in rhyming, we should no doubt have had one Endymion more, and who would presume to say that the picture of Endymion is not worth a fine poem?

There was, in the second place, a very petty

rhymester, named Alisan de Chazet, an amiable man, with a jolly face, fond of pleasure and good cheer. Wherever people wished to be merry he was invited; he was at all fashionable dinners, balls, and entertainments: he was to be seen the same evening in the Faubourg St. Germain, in the Marais, and in the Chaussée d'Antin. A pleasing trait in his character was that with a turn for wit he had a profound horror of satire. He was always pleased, always in the humour to praise. He had praised the Directory; at this moment he was praising Napoleon; and at a later period he praised Louis XVIII. This poor M. Alisan de Chazet was the optimist of the songsters. He died, I believe, five or six years ago, for I am not sure of that: but I am very certain that if we were to have a new dynasty, or a new government, which Heaven forefend, M. Alisan de Chazet would rise from his grave to be praise it.

Next to him was placed, as a contrast, a genuine literary man, Louis Sébastien Mercier, author of the *Tableau de Paris*, of *l'An deux mille quatre cent quarante*, of some interesting dramas, and several good comedies. He was not wholly irreproachable on the score of the revolution; but he displayed so much honesty

in his opinion, he condemned himself with so much frankness for his conduct, that my father was glad to see him. There was genius in the fine face of that old man ; his smile was full of simplicity and at the same time of archness ; his conversation was lively, animated, brilliant, and better *written*, if I may so express myself, than his printed works. It was Mercier who first broke through the rules imposed by Corneille and Racine, and if ever the new dramatic school should prove triumphant, it will owe a signal tribute of honour to the author of *La Mort de Louis XI.*

I sketch all these portraits but slightly that I may come the sooner to my own story.

We were seated at table and had begun dinner. I happened to cast my eye on the new servant whom my father had that morning engaged. He was my *incognito* of the church ! but no ; he had no mustaches. A few moments afterwards, I looked at him again to see whether I was not mistaken. It was he. A servant ! I in love with a servant ! The thought was enough to make one die of shame a hundred times over. I could hold out no longer, my senses forsook me, and I fainted.

On recovering I found myself in my room ;

I was alone ; I burst into a fit of crying : that is the resource of our sex. I wished this unknown person out of the hotel, and knew not how to set about removing him. When the dinner was over, my father, uneasy at not seeing me return, came to enquire how I found myself. "Very ill," I replied, and this was quite true ; my poor heart was at the last extremity. My father immediately sent for M. Alibert.

M. Alibert was then laying the foundation of that celebrity which he now possesses. As a learned and discreet doctor, he pleased persons of grave minds, and as an amiable doctor, he pleased the ladies still more. M. Alibert at that time was a very clever man, and he was a man of gallantry ; he is still very clever, but he is now somewhat less occupied with the vanities of this world.

M. Alibert felt my pulse and made me shew him my tongue : that is the way that all doctors begin with you. He shook his head, and then declared that I was going to have a dangerous eruption : for even at this time he referred all complaints to cutaneous diseases. He ordered me to keep my room and my bed, which was exactly what I wished to do.

Every body had retired, and I was just

about to lie down, when I found under my pillow a paper,—a letter. Who could write me a letter? Who could have put it there? I opened, I read it: I trembled; it was a declaration of love. Never was passion expressed with more delicacy and energy. It was signed Charles de La.... The name is known, too well known, to the misfortune of him who owns it; it then belonged to a very amiable hare-brained young man. Charles's first female friend, and she who deserved to be his wife, will never forget his good qualities at a more mature age, and never prove unfaithful to their sorrows.

CHAPTER IV.

The same subject continued.—More about love.—Madame de Staél.—Her morals.—Portrait of her.—Denouement of my love affair.

THE first thing I did, after I had finished reading this note was, to congratulate myself that my heart had not at least suffered itself to be surprised by a man who was not worthy of it. Though I had very little experience,

I had still enough to recognize in the manner in which this declaration was worded, the style and language of a person who kept the best company. I read it over and over again and each time with increased pleasure. There was such delicacy! such passion! I nevertheless considered that if M. de L.... should be discovered in my father's house in that disguise, I might be compromised. What was to be done?

I passed the night in the greatest agitation, without being able to close my eyes for a moment. On the morrow I had in reality that fever, which on the preceding day existed only in the imagination and in the prescription of Dr. Alibert. I determined not to see that young man again and to insist on his going immediately, and I rose to write to him and to apprise him of this my irrevocable resolution. In my answer to M. de L.... I insisted so urgently on the necessity of his departure, that I ran the risk of exciting in him a more ardent desire to stay. But how was this imprudent paper to be delivered? The providence of lovers came to my aid.

Besides my gouvernante, I had in my service, as lady's maid, a young female of about twenty, named Juliette. She was handsome, rather

volatile, of an excellent disposition and devotedly attached to me. On the preceding evening she had been the last to retire from my chamber. The reader must bear in mind this circumstance in order to understand the narrative.

After writing my letter I had just lain down again, when Juliette entered my room. She asked me how I had passed the night, came up to my bed, as if for the purpose of adjusting it, and I perceived that the indiscreet girl was anxiously groping for something under my pillow. The letter was gone. She then asked me, not without stammering and blushing immoderately, if I had found here she paused, and I began to blush as deeply as she had done. I could not answer her; my agitation must have spoken plainly enough. After a pause of a few moments: "Ah! *mon Dieu!* Mademoiselle," said she in a low tone, that poor young man is dying for love; he is in the utmost distress. He is afraid that the emotion which you felt yesterday at sight of him is the cause of your illness. He beseeches you to forgive him and not to hate him."

I ought to have been angry, to have broken out into reproaches against M. de L.... who had presumed to write to me, and against

Juliette who had taken charge of his letter. I did nothing of the kind ; either because this young man had begun to inspire me with love, or because the conversations of the Count de Lauraguais and the Marquis de Chimene had, by degrees and without my being conscious of it, excited in me a wish to figure in some such affair of gallantry as they were in the habit of relating. Not having the power therefore to be angry, I merely asked Juliette, with a childish curiosity, in what manner the audacious fellow had introduced himself into the house. I learned that he had prevailed upon one of our servants to leave, and procured him a place with one of his friends ; he had then come and offered himself to my father, and, thanks to his good looks, he had been hired. Once in the house he had won Mademoiselle Juliette, I cannot tell how. At any rate he had succeeded so well, that she was his with soul and body, and had made no scruple to take charge of his letter at his request. This boldness, I must confess, pleased me exceedingly. Nevertheless, I begged Juliette to prevail upon the young man to leave the house, and, to influence her the more to comply, I gave her the letter which I had just written.

Soon after she was gone, in came my father

accompanied by M. Alibert. The latter appeared greatly surprised that the prognosticated eruption had not made its appearance. As for my father, he seemed to be much alarmed at my illness. I cheered him as well as I could ; I merely complained of great weakness, and of the necessity I was under to keep my room and my bed. The doctor approved this resolution. They left me. As soon as I was alone, I began to think of him whom I had determined to banish from my presence. Juliette returned ; she brought a second letter, still more tender and more impassioned than the first. Charles protested that he would not obey me till he had seen me, and then he would retire, though the separation would probably cost him his life.

Good God ! how this letter agitated me ! How my poor heart began to throb ! how my poor head went to work ! In us females, even in the most prudent of us, there lurks a secret fire, which needs but an occasion to rekindle and burst forth. Does all our pretended modesty then proceed from the education that is given us ? and our false delicacy from the prejudices with which we have been imbued in childhood ? This is not my opinion only, but that of a king possessing a sound understanding,—

of Louis XVIII. I shall, perhaps, be asked, what the monarch who drew up our charter has to do with this matter? Patience, reader! you shall know by and by, if you will proceed with the perusal of these Memoirs.

Charles was absolutely determined to speak to me. I was not without some wish to hear what he had to say. I fancied that one who could write such charming letters could not but say the sweetest and most agreeable things in the world to me. Besides, would it be right to drive him to desperation? Juliette advised me to take pity on such ardent love. She dwelt so forcibly on the extraordinary attachment indicated by this imprudent step—a young man of good family who, in order to be near me, consented to become a menial servant; in short, Juliette pleaded most eloquently the cause of her client; her client was amiable; I was weak, and I assented.

It was agreed that I should make my illness a pretext for keeping my bed the whole day; that towards evening I should rise, as if I was better, and prevail on my father to go to Madame de Vaudemont's, or the Duchess de Chevreuse's, or to some other of his acquaintance's, where he generally staid till midnight. When my father was gone, M. Charles was

to be introduced into Juliette's chamber, and I was to go and talk with him. My gouvernante retired to bed early, and, by taking care not to make a noise, I should have nothing to fear from her vigilance.

Every thing turned out as I wished ; I went trembling to this interview which I had so foolishly granted. Charles was waiting for me in Juliette's chamber : how delightful did this *tête-à-tête* with him appear to me ! I granted perhaps too much ; but I confess Charles might have obtained more had he been so disposed : his reserve and discretion afforded me at least a pretext for prolonging our conversation. I had met Charles merely for the purpose of persuading him to leave our house ; and yet not a word was said on the subject. Two lovers who are together for the first time have something else to talk about than their separation. Juliette was there by way of sentinel, and at the same time to watch the two lovers : her giddy look formed a singular contrast with this prudential character.

At parting, we thought of nothing but meeting again. We promised to see each other next day in the same place and at the same hour ; we were both punctual, and also on the following day ; but these interviews would

probably have ended in my ruin, but for an unexpected interposition which saved me from my folly.

There was at this time in France a woman of superior genius, destined to confer glory on her age and country. This woman was profound as Montesquieu, witty as Voltaire, impassioned as Jean Jacques Rousseau ; but, continuing to be a woman in heart, she thought there was nothing derogatory in being subject herself to the foibles of her sex and having compassion on those of others. Her versatile imagination could turn to every subject, was adequate to every thing. She discussed with equal enthusiasm political questions and the sentiments of private life ; she would have given advice to power just as well as to mere friendship.

If you ask for a portrait of this extraordinary woman, I should say that her beauty, like her genius, was quite masculine. She was of majestic stature, and had a wide chest, the movements of which had also their eloquence when agitated by the demon of inspiration. Her physiognomy was rather noble than delicate. I know not why she is represented holding a nosegay in her hand ; I would rather see her with a lyre, like her own Corinna.

Proud of her father, she loved to hold up M. Necker as the greatest of statesmen ; but her filial tenderness was perhaps tinctured with romantic exaltation. In the consciousness of her superiority, she had paid homage to the genius of Napoleon, hoping that he would not continue hostile to her ; but, either because he was afraid of being closely searched by her scrutinizing eye, or because he had no sympathy for her, Napoleon preferred her hatred to her alliance. War was declared, but Madame de Staël had the worst of it : as a vanquished enemy, she could do no more than harass the giant by shafts thrown sometimes from too great a distance to reach him ; while he, on his side, overwhelmed her with the whole weight of his power, and, from the efforts which he made to rid himself of her, it would have been supposed that he dreaded her not less than all the rest of Europe : yet Corinna had no other general and no other army but herself alone.

At the period I am speaking of, Madame de Staël was exiled. She had not been sent out of France, but forbidden to approach within forty leagues of Paris. She had, nevertheless, taken up her abode at the house of one of her friends, twelve leagues from the

capital, and frequently even made little excursions thither ; in her retreat she was visited by a select society. M. de La.... had been introduced to her by M. de Cat.... ; Madame de Staël took particular notice of this so ardent and impassioned young man ; her kindness had perhaps reached the first step of a more tender preference ; but the heart of Charles, filled with admiration for Madame de Staël, had no room for any other sentiment : when I, quite a girl, without genius or any other merit than two bright eyes, snatched the prize from the most celebrated woman of the age.

My father, a professed partisan of Marie Antoinette's, had but little intercourse with those persons of whom that queen had reason to complain, and perhaps Madame de Staël was one of that number ; time had nevertheless weakened former antipathies ; we had met in society and spoken to each other. A few compliments paid by Madame de Staël to my graceful carriage had flattered the self-love of my father, who, on his side, admitted that Madame de Staël possessed superior talents. Just at this time, a late servant of our family having applied to Madame de Staël, referred to my father, and one morning that lady came to our hotel to make enquiry concerning her.

My father had gone out. I was alone in the drawing room ; but Charles was not far off, and I knew that he was coming back. Madame de Staël was announced. At that name I was embarrassed ; I rose and made a very awkward courtesy which was returned with mingled grace and dignity. We sat down. All at once Charles returned, and, not seeing Madame de Staël, he approached me with the familiarity of a brother : but Madame de Staël, though near-sighted, recognized him and exclaimed : " You here ! and in this livery ! What comedy are you acting ?

Had hell opened under my feet, I should not have been more horror-struck than by this terrible question. A shriek escaped me, and this was quite sufficient to reveal all to Madame de Staël. Charles, having no plausible excuse at hand, observed a profound silence, and gravely bowing, retired evidently confused and humbled—he who has since braved death with such heroic courage. As for me, left alone with Madame de Staël, I could not help crying like a child. It has been said that Madame de Staël was fond of preaching sermons : that day she had fair scope and seemed to take pleasure in making a long maternal remonstrance. My inexperience and embarrass-

ment naturally gave her this advantage over me : she availed herself of it with her usual ability and did not fail also to claim the rights of her friendship for Charles, whom she wished, she said, to save from the commission of a crime, if it was not too late. I listened to her harangue with the docility of a little child : all that I would fain have asked of her was secrecy ; this she spontaneously promised me, and then passed to the subject of her visit, as if nothing had happened, and she retired casting on me that look of protection, which the most superior woman loves to assume when she has been giving good advice.

I was annihilated ; and such was my shame that I verily believe if Charles had then met my sight, I should have been afraid of him : I durst not even look at myself in the mirror for several days. A real illness came to my relief, and this time afforded Dr. Alibert occasion to exercise his art beneficially. But what astonished myself was that the physical malady so completely extinguished my secret sentiments, that I forgot my love in my fever, and when I recovered my health, I seemed as if awaking from a dream. Since that time the recollection of Charles has presented itself to my mind in a softer light, but always accompanied with

a certain bitter remorse, which more real faults only have effaced. I have always thought, without having ever dared to enquire, that Madame de Staël made Charles come to her, and opened his eyes to the odious nature of his designs. The very day after that on which I took seriously to my bed, he quitted our service upon some pretext or other ; and when I next saw him, he was a soldier, brave as his sword. Why did he not fall on the field of honour !

Much about the same time Juliette changed her condition, and I am certain that Madame de Staël had a secret hand in this little revolution also in the household of my father, who had not the least suspicion of the truth.

After my convalescence, my father proposed to take me to see Madame de Staël, who had frequently sent to enquire after my health. My embarrassment on meeting her, who had restored me to reason, was extreme. She kindly embraced me, and found means to say to me, unheard by any other person : " I have been unhappy like you ; be you courageous like me."

C H A P T E R V.

Opinion of Madame de Staël on love.—Madame Recamier.—The Duke de Montmorency.—M. Benjamin Constant.—The Marquis de Catelan.—New exile of Madame de Staël.—My marriage.—My appearance at the Tuileries.—The Duke of Montebello.—The Duchess of Montebello.—The Duchess of Abrantes.—Countess Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely.—The Duchess de Cossé-Brissac.—Countess de Montesquiou-Fezensac.—Madame de R..... Prince Metternich.—Saying of Napoleon respecting that ambassador.

AT the risk of being declared in “ full court of love” a woman unworthy of loving, a materialist in point of inclination, I repeat that to a physical malady alone do I attribute the cure of my silly passion. I had not within me that heroism which exalts us above ourselves. To have the moral courage recommended to me by Madame de Staël, I must like her have already undergone some of those great sacrifices which habituate the soul to suffering: but I had not yet acquired that sad experience. For the first time I saw the illusions of my youth dissipated; I saw the spell that had been thrown over my life broken. I regretted

this delicious dream like a little child ; but was quite ready to reproach myself with my childishness as soon as any one should have made me ashamed of it, quite ready to dream of another folly, or if you please, another love. But no, it was not yet love that I had felt ; at my age could I feel it ? At seventeen one is apt to take for a secret inclination of the heart what is but a mere caprice of the imagination, and we charge to the account of this poor heart all the extravagances into which we are led by wrongheadedness.

I now know unfortunately, that to love in reality a female must be past the period of early youth. The heart which had previously slumbered then awakes, and if we meet with that other self which decides the lot of life, we attach ourselves to it with all the force of reason. What I am here writing is, if not the precise words, at least the opinion of Madame de Staël. She said one day, in my presence, that it is absurd to represent Love as a child ; that it would be much more correct to give him the semblance of mature manhood. This assertion is certainly liable to some objection ; but I must not forget that I am writing for the purpose of narrating and not disputing ; especially with Madame de Staël.

This celebrated woman asked my father to leave me with her for a few days, and my father consented to it. The time which I spent in her society was of great benefit to me: among other advantages, my mind expanded, in some measure, under the shade of her lofty understanding. I became her pupil, and acquired a confidence in myself and an energy of will, which have sometimes been regarded as merits. Like a good scholar, I vowed to Madame de Staël an affection that was rather fanatical; such, however, was the attachment with which she inspired all her friends. She had not a great number, because at this period she was proscribed, but they were all devoted to her in life and death. You would have said that this woman, who could not love any thing by halves, could not inspire a friendship that was not exclusive.

I saw at Madame de Staël's a person of whom it is impossible to speak well enough; this was the beautiful and ever beautiful Madame Recamier, a woman whose heart is not less perfect than her beauty. People have said that she was not a woman of mind; they should have said that she had no malice. To my thinking, I never met with a more agreeable, more ingenious, more solid understanding.

This has been doubted because she never sought to shew it off at the expense of others: another commendable trait in her character. She has conducted herself, in all circumstances, in a manner in which there will be found nothing to censure, unless you are determined to misconstrue the simplest actions. She was kind, generous, compassionate, while she lived in the bustle of the great world; at present, in her retirement, she has still the same virtues, and above all indulgence: piety does not change a truly excellent soul. May she find in the justice which I render her the proof of an attachment which she cannot doubt!

One of her friends, who was also Madame de Staël's—for it was impossible to love one without loving the other—was Mathieu de Montmorency. He too has been ill thought of: too strict an account has been kept of the inconsistencies of his youth. I admit that at the commencement of the revolution, hurried away by ideas which at the bottom were most generous, he did not remain in his place, and appeared embarrassed to bear with propriety the most illustrious name in France and indeed in Europe; but, if he then deserved the severe reprimand of the abbé Maury, he

afterwards made full atonement for his faults. There was in him all that constitutes the honourable and the honest man: I have always found him incapable of doing ill and ready to do good; his piety was not rancorous or irascible, but mild as the piety of an angel. Enquire the character of M. de Montmorency of his servants to whom he was a father, of the poor to whom he was a friend; they will all answer you with praises of the excellent man, who is no more.

The very reason which caused people to say that madame Recamier was not a woman of mind, led them to express the same opinion of Mathieu de Montmorency. He was not an eagle, it is true; but he studied for himself so conscientiously, and had reflexions so solid and ideas so just, that he might well be forgiven for not being an utterer of witticisms. I am here presenting but a sketch of M. de Montmorency's portrait; he will appear again in the course of these Memoirs, and then he shall delineate himself.

Whom else did I meet with in the society of Madame de Staël? M. Benjamin Constant, her obliged satellite, the Baron de Rebecque, the most feudal of all the liberals of France; I verily believe that if he had no other alter-

native, M. Benjamin Constant, Baron de Rebecque, would rather throw away his literary works than his titles of nobility. He wishes to play the part of the commoner, but he betrays the gentleman in spite of his disguise ; he was then half imperialist ; he durst not confess as much before his terrible friend, or she would never have forgiven him ; but he wrote incognito in favour of Napoleon. After all, this is not meant as a reproach ; almost all our liberals of the present day have been vehement partisans of the empire ; ask this or that imperial censor else.

M. le Baron de Rebecque, as a private man possesses excellent qualities ; he is a sure, a steady friend ; but M. Benjamin Constant, the public character, offers no guarantee. To him every thing is indifferent, all opinions are alike. "Whoever wants him may have him," said Louis XVIII to me ; "let him know over-night and you may rely upon him for the morrow." This assertion is true ; there is an unfortunate indecision in his political character ; he is a weathercock, which turns unconsciously with every breeze.

He enlivened the conversation by his witty sallies and his ingenious repartees ; but when he attempted to define he was no longer the

same person. His fine imagination, lost amid space, could not fix upon any thing. "Come to a conclusion, then," said Madame de Staël to him: "sum up for once in your life." Then turning towards us: "What a pretty windmill," said she, "it is impossible to have sails better gilt; but it will never stop."

I have also seen at Madame de Staël's the Marquis de Catelan, formerly attorney-general to the parliament of Toulouse. The ambition of the marquis was such that he would not have accepted any but a first place, and unluckily he was not offered even the second. He was a man of wit and would have had still more if he had not been anxious to have so much: he was a very handsome man and had a remarkably fine leg; this he well knew, and was continually looking at it, that it might be noticed by others. La Bruyere, I believe, has observed, that there is nothing worse in the world than a male coquet: could that writer have known the Marquis de Catelan?

There were other persons whom I forget or whom I purposely pass over in silence, because I am in haste to come to the restoration, when my importance at court commences. My father, entirely reconciled with Madame de Staël, took great delight in her society, while

I professed the warmest admiration of that superior woman ; her friendship would certainly have influenced my career, had not a new thunderbolt given it a new direction.

I have mentioned that her presence at Paris was tolerated, but the ruling power was only waiting for an occasion to exile her from the capital. The poetic novel, *Corinna*, was the signal for a new persecution. Madame de Staël was ordered to quit Paris.

This petty act of despotism exceedingly aggravated the hatred which we already felt for the emperor ; all of us wished for his fall, and it will be seen by and by, that I took upon myself the part of the royalist Epicharis : I conspired.

I shall perhaps be asked if it was becoming in a young girl to turn conspirator ? I reply, that at this period I was no longer a young girl ; I was a married woman. Almost immediately after the departure of Madame de Staël, I had married a man of quality ; as to the name and title of my husband, that is a secret which I shall not divulge to the reader : suffice it, therefore, to state that I had made a suitable and very brilliant match. My lord and master resided in Paris ; he was anxious to push his fortune at court : this embroiled

him with my father. I found myself placed unfortunately between the two persons who were dearest to me in the world, without being able to unite them: each told me painful truths concerning the other. I shall take leave to introduce a reflexion by the way: in such a situation the husband has much more to lose than the father; the latter, at least, happens what will, always retains an accustomed authority, a respect generated in his daughter's earliest childhood; but if the husband has not found means to gain his wife's love or esteem, nothing at all is left him. This reflexion is not so useless as it may appear: it embraces the whole morality of my subsequent conduct.

Whatever my opinion might be, I was forced to submit to the new yoke which the law had imposed upon me. I was obliged to receive in my drawing-room all the great personages of the empire; some of these were little enough, to the last degree insignificant: but there were some truly noble, and if I must speak out, they were not always those who belonged to the most ancient houses. At the Tuilleries I again met General Lannes, who had become Duke of Montebello; it was a title which his glory wore with ease, and which

added nothing to his personal distinction. Madame de Montebello, the wife of this peer of the new Charlemagne's, figured at court with as much dignity as if she had always been the inmate of one ; she was a pattern of every virtae ; her strictness, tempered by a fascinating sweetness, commanded attention and almost respect : I say *almost*, because she was too young and too handsome to be so very respectable. Napoleon, who could so well appreciate those whom he employed, subsequently placed the Duchess of Montebello about his second wife : he could not have given a better guide to the empress ; but Maria Louisa could not warm her heart at the inspirations of her first lady of honour. I know for certain, that if the archduchess had listened, on the 30th of March 1814, to the energetic counsels of Madame de Montebello, Napoleon would not have fallen with such violence, nor should we perhaps at this day have the happiness of being governed by Bourbons. On that memorable occasion Madame de Montebello alone displayed manly courage, while all the men behaved like women.

No sooner had I made my first appearance at the Tuileries than several of my sex paid me attentions for the purpose of learning, I suppose,

what motives brought me to the palace. Alas! I had but one idea: that was to see the imperial occupant of that royal abode quit it soon and make way for its former owners. Among the ladies whom I saw most of, I shall first mention the Duchess of Abrantes, formerly Mademoiselle Permond; she prided herself on the blood of the Comneni which flowed in her veins, and conceived that not an individual in the world could compete, in point of birth, with the descendant of the emperors of Constantinople; she was handsome and clever, but though made to be happy she was not so.

I saw also the Countess Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely, who united the charms of mind to those of a celestial face; unfortunately she disguised the most solid qualities under an appearance of frivolity, which caused a very wrong opinion to be entertained of her. Was she gone out to perform an act of charity, she was supposed to be engaged with her pleasures; was she occupied with serious studies, she was thought to be devising a new dress.

There was already at the court of the emperor the old Duchess of Cossé-Brissac, very

deformed, very clever, and dying of solicitude not to remain idle amidst this universal bustle ; her aristocratic pride kept that of the others on the *qui vive*. I met her at the house of the arch-chancellor Cambaceres, who enacted the great man in his behaviour towards Madame de Brissac, for fear Madame de Brissac might assume the great lady towards him.

Madame de Montesquiou-Fezensac was also one of those with whom I could have wished to associate, but that was scarcely possible ; she was too grave and I too giddy. There was so much seriousness in her qualities that I could give her nothing but my esteem : she was virtue in a court-dress.

I was more intimate with Madame de Beausset, wife of the prefect of the palace. She was an Irishwoman, and carried into society that northern coldness, which she did not always manifest in her affections ; she was extremely well informed, but too handsome not to prefer the part of a lady of fashion to that of a blue stocking ; her figure had something majestic and imposing, but her familiarity attracted those whom her queenly bearing might have intimidated and kept at a distance.

I selected Madame de R.... for my friend.

I knew nothing of her when I chose my society, and afterwards, when I became better acquainted with her, she attached me to her too strongly by the sweetness of her disposition and the charms of her mind, for me to resolve to break with her. Madame de R.... said to me one day: "People cry out against me, because I am more frank and disinterested than others in my connexions. Why should I conceal my having lovers, if I think them worthy of me? why should I require payment for the pleasure which I give, if I balance accounts with that which I receive?"

Madame de R.... belonged like me to the old *régime* by her family and to the new by her husband. She was a royalist in the Faubourg St. Germain, and an imperialist with the bankers' ladies on the other side of the water. She had always a discharged lover, a lover in possession, and a lover in expectation. All that was needed with her was patience, for each swain was sure of having his turn; she never repulsed any one; so that she had admirers of all colours, and of all classes: marshals of France, lieutenants, lawyers and financiers; she pleased every body. After a certain time I met in this gallant hie-

rarchy with a clerk of the *droits réunis*: this Madame de R.... called working at a general fusion. She ought to have lived in 1789, and then there would have been no revolution: she ought to have continued young till 1817; what a useful assistant to the inventors of the ministerial see-saw!

We often went together to see the Duehess of Abrantes, sometimes lively, at others doleful, according as her poor husband played the hero or the madman. There came also to the same house a man, then very aimable and now very celebrated: at present the first feoffee in the world, and then the humblest train-bearer of the Napoleonian purple.

At that time M. de Metternich transacted the affairs of Austria by paying court to the noble ladies of Paris. He was in general in love with all those females whose husbands were likely to be in possession of any state secrets. In their society he threw policy into his ogles and diplomacy into his sighs. But in vain did he flatter himself, with his Austrian gallantry, to trick Napoleon; the latter knew his man by heart. "Why do not you send Metternich away?" said the grumbler Duroc, to his master. "Because

they would send me another, whom I should have to study; and I prefer one who is no longer able to deceive me."

This ambassador took it into his head, one fine morning, to think me handsome and to tell me so; I guessed immediately what he wanted of me. He hoped that I might be able to communicate to him some secret of state. In fact I could have done so: but I had been brought up to consider the house of Austria as the most inveterate enemy of the house of Bourbon, and I would not place confidence in its ambassador. I nevertheless suffered him to wheedle on, that I might see how they make love in Germany. He soon discovered that I was diverting myself at his expense, and he made his bow. I am sure that he left me in despair, so deeply was he smitten with the bright eyes of my secret.

Good heaven! how I am cramped within the narrow bounds to which I have confined myself; what curious things I should have to tell of the imperial court!—but things that are not to be found any where, not even in the kindly Memoirs of M. de Beausset. How many intrigues of gallantry could I relate! to how many political measures could I furnish a key! I must nevertheless be silent

and skip over several years that I may arrive the sooner at the epoch of the restoration.

I forewarn the reader that I suppose him to be well acquainted with the political events prior to 1814, and that I shall say no more concerning them than I am obliged to do by my subject. I forewarn him also that, in order that I may conceal nothing from him, I shall continue to keep up my incognito and my frankness; the one depends on the other.

CHAPTER VI.

A few words concerning the imperial family.—First meetings of the royalists.—M. Bellart.—M. Becquey.—M. de Levis.—General Desperrières.—M. Royer-Collard.—M. de Talleyrand.—Vicomte de Chateaubriand.—Interview with Messrs. de Polignac.—Visit of the Duke of Rovigo.—My departure for Hartwell.

It is then determined that I am to jump, with feet close together, as it were, over the empire. I shall not relate all I know respecting the interior of the imperial palace, the animosities and the secret jealousies which subsisted between Bonaparte and his brothers,

his brothers-in-law, and his sisters-in-law, and between Josephine and the daughters of Madame Lætitia. I should have had pleasure in exhibiting the victorious emperor tormented by domestic quarrels, the monarch, to whom so many docile kings sacrificed their antipathies and their affections, and who governed with so firm a hand one half of Europe, unable to maintain concord and peace in his own household. I should also have related with pleasure some interesting circumstances relative to the Count de B.... the celebrated prefect of the palace, and the glorious service which he rendered to a fair marquise by directing to her the notice of his august master. I shall even omit some amusing details concerning the secret amours of king Jerome with Madame de B....; but I particularly regret losing the occasion to speak of the beautiful, the good, the unfortunate, Queen of Westphalia, who, by the sweetness of her disposition and the charms of her mind, deserved a legitimate throne. Lastly, that the reader may be aware of all that he loses by my silence, I shall tell him that I could have furnished some curious and wholly unknown particulars concerning the coronation, the overtures made by the ancient nobility to Bonaparte, and the intrigues which

paved the way to his second marriage ; but I must not swerve from the object which I proposed to myself in writing these Memoirs : I set out with the intention of delineating Louis XVIII and his court ; I must therefore confine myself exclusively to the person of that prince and to the events in which he was concerned.

To come to them more expeditiously, I shall pass at once to the conclusion of the year 1813, the period at which the royalists began to entertain hopes that they should soon see the august family of the Bourbons upon the throne again. In all that I am about to relate I shall be sincere and tell the honest truth ; there are persons whom it will displease, because, after having courageously served the royal cause prior to the restoration, these persons enlisted under other banners. I expect remonstrances, contradictions. All bad cases may be denied, and in time of revolution there may be many an honourable act, which the actor has an interest in denying when the chances turn too abruptly : accordingly, I shall not be surprised, if this or the other excellent royalist of 1813 loudly disavows what he did at that period in behalf of the Bourbons. Let these gentlemen attack me if they think proper ; let them try to contradict me : but let them not

expect me to answer them. I am writing *Mémoirs*, and am determined not to engage in disputation; I have therefore vowed to myself to leave to the public the trouble of pronouncing between my contradicters and myself.

The families which Napoleon had loaded with titles, honours, and dignities, those to which he had granted magnificent salaries from the public exchequer, handsome pensions from his privy purse, and even secret pensions from the newspapers and the police, could not help finding the imperial government peculiarly to their liking. It was even natural enough that the republicans, tamed down some of them into senators and others into councillors of state, should consider it as the best and the wisest of the seven or eight governments which France had tried since the revolution; but a suspicious and despotic administration, a police not less terrible than the inquisition, a system of *espionnage* penetrating into the most private and retired circles, the state prisons always full, the press unworthily oppressed—(for the press is a luxury which our minds have converted into a necessary, as our modern Epicureans have done with regard to coffee and sugar)—families decimated annually by that horrible scourge, the conscription—all these

things, it must be admitted, were enough to displease those who were neither senators nor councillors of state, who had no salaries, no pensions from the police, nor even a small grant upon the banks of the Rhine.

In the hearts of these therefore, a strong discontent was secretly fermenting; the grand disaster in Russia had dispelled the superstitious admiration which the genius and good fortune of Bonaparte had till then inspired; the reverses of the campaign in Saxony caused people to pronounce the words defeat, fall, overthrow, things which the boldest had not dared to think of. Mallet had proved by his mad attempt that a breach was opened in the imperial throne. One conspiracy leads to another: all that fail are imprudences, follies, crimes; but the mere possibility of a conspiracy once admitted is sufficient to shake all attachments; as soon as there ceases to be complete security for the agents of despotism, they are demoralised: power passes over by degrees to the side of the opposition.

During the whole existence of the empire, men whose hearts had remained attached to the royal family had kept up a secret correspondence with his majesty Louis XVIII. These men, who had at first no common bond of union,

thought that it was high time to meet and to concert measures for striking a grand blow at the colossus which began to totter.

I was intimately connected with several of these royalist agents, and I was acquainted with their intrigues at a period when they were enveloped in the most profound mystery. The chivalrous loyalty of my friends, the religious veneration which they cherished for a proscribed family, the courage with which they exposed themselves, almost without hope, to the vengeance of imperial power ; all this had deeply interested me, by a sort of romantic passion which, in my opinion, is natural to all female hearts. By degrees I became tenderly attached to a cause which I saw so generously defended ; I felt myself attracted to the Bourbons by a vague and inconsiderate instinct, which was soon changed into a deep and powerful sentiment. My father had always retained a genuine affection for them ; I recollect that in my childhood, I had heard him speak with a voice tremulous from agitation, of the tragic end of Louis XVI, and the misfortunes of his august family. These first impressions were never effaced from my memory, and I am convinced that they have greatly contributed to produce in me that love

for our legitimate princes, which was for several years the object of all my thoughts and the motive of all my actions. Besides, I hated Bonaparte most cordially ever since his divorce of Josephine. Several anecdotes which were related to me at that period caused me to detest him as a man of the most revolting insensibility ; or rather my reason had found all sort of faults in him, as soon as my woman's heart had conceived a hatred for him. Besides, I had two sons who were beginning to grow up and whom I idolized ; and I could not think without indignation that my dear children would soon have to leave me, to go to the military schools of this Bonaparte, and that afterwards they would be ordered off, the one to perish by cold in the deserts of Russia, the other to be murdered by the consecrated dagger of a monk under the scorching sun of Spain.

I know not whether I am giving a faithful analysis of what was passing in my heart at a period already remote, but I can assert with truth that I had become a passionate royalist ; I had connected myself more and more closely with such of my friends as corresponded with Louis XVIII ; I had been, at my desire, presented by them to the other agents of the

Bourbons ; and when, in 1813, they began to concert operations and to hold secret meetings, I was in the midst of all these intrigues, I attended all these meetings : in short, I embarked in that dangerous enterprize with all the ardour and impetuosity natural to my character.

At the head of the royalist party at this time was M. Bellart, attorney and member of the general council of the department of the Seine. He was a man of warm passions and ardent imagination ; his eloquence which, like his conversation, was vehement and confused, had gained him a high reputation ; he had shone more particularly in the defence of Mademoiselle Ciccé, implicated in the affair of the infernal machine, and in the trial of General Moreau. M. Bellart who was esteemed and even beloved by the emperor, hesitated long before he decided against him ; but his resolution once taken, he declared war to the death against the imperial despotism, and he threw himself, body and soul, into the royalist party. It will be seen in the sequel what immense services he rendered to the Bourbons. Why was this honest and courageous man so ill requited for his zeal ? The public gave credit to calumnies circulated against him, which filled his last years with bitterness and vexation. Was

he not represented as a fanatic magistrate, who, armed with the sword of the law, slaughtered his enemies at pleasure? I can affirm that M. Bellart was the most upright, the most amiable, and the most benevolent of men. His political opinions were violent, but they were sincere and disinterested; in defence of them he would have fearlessly ascended the scaffold; his misfortune was the trial of an illustrious marshal. Appointed by Louis XVIII to perform the duty of accuser in that unlucky cause, he pleaded against the Prince of the Moscowa with warmth, with vehemence, but at the bottom of his heart he pitied and would even fain have saved him, as the following fact will prove. A few days before the pleadings, the brother of Madame Ney went to implore M. Bellart in favour of the marshal. M. Bellart, in a long conversation, explained the system of defence which the advocates of the accused ought to adopt; that it was their business not to discuss, but to move; to oppose to the errors of a moment thirty years of glory; and to solicit nobly the kind consideration of the peers and the royal clemency. He added: "I will give you my deas in writing that you may communicate them to our counsel; call upon me again."

Three days afterwards he delivered to Ney's brother-in-law, not merely notes, but an entire defence of the marshal. The original of this curious document is in the possession of a member of the faculty of letters at Paris. Now, the more humane M. Bellart proved himself as a man, the more he deemed it his duty to be severe as a magistrate.

But this is enough concerning a man whose name will frequently occur in the course of these Memoirs. I shall proceed to the other royalist conspirators. Beside the impetuous M. Bellart, was, as if to form a contrast with him, the prudent M. Becquey. I never saw a man so calm, so deliberate, so phlegmatic: but beneath this somewhat timid reserve might be discerned a real attachment to the royal cause.

The Duke de Levis was also one of us: he ardently desired the return of the Bourbons; and indeed, had we needed nothing more than plans for replacing them on the throne, the business would soon have been settled: M. de Levis brought us one regularly every morning; he explained it with whimsical ingenuity but without much energy—a species of eloquence which is to be found in some of his writings:

but upon the whole there was something too academic in his opinions.

I was acquainted also with the political sentiments of General Desperrières. This officer, remarkable for his coolness and his intrepidity on the field of battle, is, unluckily for his fortune and his quiet, too careless in the management of his affairs and in all the acts of private life. On the 20th of June 1792 he rescued the dauphin from the fury of the populace, who, on that day, would have slaughtered the king and his august family. He subsequently served with distinction under Moreau in the glorious campaign on the Rhine. Not liked by Bonaparte who expected order and regularity in every thing, he lived in complete disgrace, tormented by a wish for activity and motion, which he could not gratify. His heart, wounded by this long injustice and above all by domestic vexations, was re-invigorated at the name of the legitimate king; the pleasing prospect of bursting at length out of inactivity gave new force to his regret for the royal family.

Persecuted by dishonest creditors and by the agents of the imperial police, the poor general was never quiet: he nevertheless with

equal ardour composed works on military tactics and formed plans of counter-revolution. He caused himself to be exiled to Rouen, and there it was that the restoration found him. I relied upon the general as firmly as upon myself; it was to him that I owed my acquaintance with the Chevalier de Famenil, another fervent royalist, whatever his enemies may say of him, and who served me essentially in the correspondence for which I employed him.

I must not forget M. Royer Collard, the oldest of the correspondents of Louis XVIII. M. Royer Collard was too young to have attached himself to the Bourbons before the revolution; but, compromised in the counter-revolution of Fructidor, exiled at that period, and thrown into contact with the royal family, he had returned to France with secret designs against the consulate. The empire soon deranged some of his calculations and he confined himself to speculative royalism. At a later period he fancied that he was attacked by the contempt of Bonaparte for metaphysicians; this contempt appeared to him a real personality. Thus, by dint of reflexion on history and on political theories, he had attained the conviction that the hereditary trans-

mission of the throne in the family of our kings was the only solid guarantee of the happiness and liberty of the people. Accordingly, from the solitude of his study and from amidst his books, he had anew turned his eyes toward our exiled princes, and felt for them a love wholly philosophical and founded on reason. It is not thus that gentlemen conceive attachment to the sacred person of their masters; but was it right to represent for this reason the courageous champion of legitimacy as the greatest jacobin in the kingdom? Such was not the opinion of Louis XVIII who had sur-named M. Royer Collard the royalist *par excellence*. On the different occasions that I have had to observe M. Royer Collard, before and since the restoration, I have always found him frank, sincere, and deeply convinced of the truth of his opinions. Endowed with a mind more profound than comprehensive, he grasps' questions with extraordinary vigour, and leaves the luminous traces of his passage upon all matters on which he touches. Lastly, like all superior geniuses, he skilfully wields the weapon of ridicule, and in conversation he frequently employs a keen, penetrating, and somewhat better raillery. As the most brilliant pictures have their shades, so

M. Royer Collard is reproached with a philosophic vanity which would render him unfit for public business.

We had also among our friends M. Sosthene de la Rochefoucauld, M. Alexis de Noailles, and M. de Talleyrand. Yes, the Prince of Benevent cooperated also in promoting the return of the king, but with such extreme caution that I know not whether he avowed it to himself. Hated and feared by Napoleon, detested by the courtiers in favour, on very bad terms with the Duke of Rovigo, who constantly kept a vigilant eye upon him, he had to avoid a thousand shoals, which he did with his usual skill. M. de Talleyrand was born for intrigue, and he has been true to his vocation: he has intrigued for and against every government from the constituent assembly to the restoration: for them, when they began to be established, or when he could hope to be well rewarded by them; against them; when they began to totter and there was more to be gained by their presumed successor. He is the cleverest and most amiable egotist in the world. Amidst the rapid evolutions of his policy, he has laboured with admirable perseverance in behalf of his private fortune, and not one change has taken place in the destinies of France but has increased the power and the

influence of the former Bishop of Autun. The horrid recollections of the murder of the Duke d'Enghien have latterly been conjured up against him; to defend himself he has accused the Duke of Rovigo; but, if he has succeeded in shewing that the former minister of the police was guilty, according to the notions of many people, he has not been so successful in proving that he himself was innocent. For the rest, he has rendered such services to the reigning house, that he had a right to use this expression in a letter to Louis XVIII which he published: "The enemies of your august family will not pardon me for having twice replaced you on the throne of France." The chief talent of M. Talleyrand consists in making himself master of a business in conversation, and in appropriating to himself, in an acute discussion, the written labours of an able secretary: this secretary has frequently been Count d'Hauterive, pupil to the great Duke of Choiseul, and who has retained a youthful imagination to the most advanced age. Every body's bon-mots have been attributed to M. de Talleyrand, but he has been still better pleased with having the peculiar merit of Count d'Hauterive fathered upon him. If Napoleon, for example, required a report or any diplomatic paper of M. de Talleyrand, the latter sent

for or went to M. d'Hauterive, and after dictating to him merely the title of the paper, he would say : " Well, you can go on with it ; you are acquainted with my ideas on the subject." Louis XVIII has several times repeated to me that M. d'Hauterive had in him stuff enough for three statesmen. Accordingly, no ministry has been able to do without him, but they have taken good care not to make his fortune, and he, like the rest, has not thought about it either.

I shall not say any thing in this chapter concerning the Viscount de Chateaubriand ; I shall have occasion to notice him by and by. For the present therefore I shall merely observe that, if constitutional royalty has partisans in France, it is to M. de Chateaubriand that it is indebted for them ; it was he who had the skill to connect the new order of things with the ancient monarchy of St. Louis ; it was he who formed an eternal alliance between the people who desired liberty, and the throne which consented to give it to them.

Fortune meanwhile proved unfaithful to Napoleon ; our troops returned from Leipsick ; they brought back again with them their old torn banner, but this time torn by defeat. These disasters would perhaps have afflicted our French hearts, had we not consoled our-

selves with the idea that they were likely to restore Louis XVIII to us. But, were we sure that the allies would suffer that prince to ascend the throne of his ancestors ? Had not the enemies of France resolved, by way of indemnifying themselves for their former defeats, to dismember our provinces and to divide the spoil ? At all events, would not a regency in the name of Napoleon II be better suited to the interests of Austria and the jealous hatred of the other powers ?

We had no doubt that the king was apprised of the intentions of the allied sovereigns, and it was decided that an intelligent and trusty person should be sent to him. I offered myself for this mission ; the difficulties were immense, yet not sufficient to deter me. But what pretext could be devised to prevent suspicion attaching to my journey ? how was I to escape the hundred thousand Arguses who watched us ? how baffle both Baron Pasquier, the prefect of police, and the Duke of Rovigo ? I had, besides, to keep up appearances with the latter, for I had become acquainted with him, I scarcely know how, and we frequently saw one another. The excellent Dr. Alibert extricated me from the dilemma : he had the kindness to give me a disorder, the name of which I have forgotten, notwithstanding its harmo-

nious termination. I kept my room; visitors flocked to see me; they found me lying upon a sofa, languishing, and scarcely able to speak. The worthy M. Portal had the goodness to declare me worse than his colleague had done, and both decided that travelling could alone restore my health. M. de Rovigo, who very often called to see me, urged me himself to set out, and I managed matters so well, that he begged me to go towards Holland, that I might be able to return more readily to France, in case the allies should gain ground upon our armies.

Before my departure, I was recommended to visit the two Messrs. de Polignac. They were then in a *maison de santé*, a sort of prison, where they were detained after the expiration of their legal captivity. Those who were unacquainted with them supposed them to possess superior talents. Thus it is that people estimate men; they always imagine them to be as lofty as the position on which fortune has placed them. I shall say nothing concerning Duke Armand; he is the most honest man that I know. Heaven has conferred on him all the virtues of private life, but has been so much the more niggardly of the talents of the statesman.

Prince Jules, his brother, has become an important personage; I shall notice him more particularly. His friends have had the art to find for him an almost royal origin, in an age when people begin again to set some value on a good pedigree; in regard to moral qualities, M. de Polignac is kind, simple, full of frankness, devoted, in life and death, to the reigning family: fortune has treated him still better than nature; but, as ambassador from France to England, he has shown himself inadequate to that difficult mission; he is not strong enough to cope with a Castlereagh or a Canning. He has been made an ambassador, a prince, a peer of the realm, and some day perhaps he will be made a minister; but there will be the limit of human power: never will it be possible to give him profound views, rapid decision, and sound judgment; in a word, all that constitutes the politician: he will always be a very petty diplomatist, who will forget that a nobleman runs the risk of being ridiculous if he displays a tradesmanlike economy. M. de Polignac has an unfortunate passion for the ministry; he has many times stretched out his hand to seize the portfolio, which has as often slipped from his grasp. I verily believe that, to obtain at length that

coveted portfolio, he would accommodate himself to the charter, which in 1814 he would not swear without some restrictions.

In 1813 I had not so severe an opinion of M. de Polignac ; his attachment to the royal family and his misfortunes had filled me with enthusiasm for him. I felt a profound emotion on entering the humble apartment which he occupied. I found a man, tall in stature, of dignified manners ; his features regular, but without expression ; his eyes dull and lustreless. Every thing about him indicated mistrust, but the awkward mistrust of a man, who is sensible that he has not sufficient discernment to discover immediately whether a deception is practised upon him or not. I came to speak to him of the Bourbons, of liberty ; he scarcely made me any answer : I persisted, mentioned my name, furnished my proofs ; he looked at me and held his tongue ; I became impatient and took my leave.

At night, I related what had passed to M. de Chateaubriand ; he could not believe me. I also reported it to M. Royer Collard, who replied : " I like that reserve ; it gives me a favourable opinion of his understanding."— " You are at liberty to think so," said I, " but you have not seen, like me, that inexpressive

physiognomy, those dull inanimate looks. I watched him narrowly, and I assure you that he is not a hero. God grant that I may be mistaken! it will be so much the better for us."

The Duke of Rovigo was instantly acquainted with my visit to Messrs. de Polignac, and called upon me the following day.

"What was your fancy to make the acquaintance of such persons as those?"

"Are they not fit to be seen?"

"No; especially at the moment of leaving the country."

"Have you any mistrust of me?"

"Mistrust is the first virtue of a minister of the police."

"Well, and what would his excellency the minister of the police have of me?"

"What did they say to you?"

"Nothing."

"What! nothing!"

"We talked about the rain, and the fine weather."

He shrugged his shoulders and did not believe me.

Notwithstanding the suspicions of M. de Rovigo, furnished with the certificate of Messrs. Alibert and Portal, I quitted France, and after

making several circuits to keep up the appearance of travelling about, I arrived without accident in England. There I took a post-chaise and pursued my way to Hartwell, a mansion fifty miles from London, where Louis XVIII resided.

CHAPTER VII.

Arrival at Hartwell.—Père Elisée.—M. de Blacas.—The Archbishop of Rheims.—The Duke de la Châtre.—Louis XVIII.—The Duchess of Angoulême.—Interview with M. de Blacas.—Audience of the king.—Conversation with his majesty.—His opinion of M. Royer Collard.—Of M. de Chateaubriand.

As I approached Hartwell, my heart throbbed with greater vehemence ; I was going to see that august family of whose virtues and vicissitudes my father had told me so much ; my imagination was overwhelmed, as it were, with all the grandeur appertaining to the name of the Bourbons, and all the magnitude of their misfortunes. This mansion appeared to me as a fantastic edifice, which had been alternately the palace of a king and the prison of an exile. The feeling which pervaded my

mind was full of sadness, but of a sadness which had its charm.

The groom came and opened the door of my post-chaise; I asked him, striving at the same time to repress my emotion, if Père Elisée was at home, and if he could conduct me to him.

Père Elisée was a member of some religious fraternity, or surgeon of St. Côme, who possessed the entire confidence of Louis XVIII: a boon companion at table, and a warm admirer of the fair sex, he at times introduced into his conversation a bluntness and a freedom that amused his majesty.

When I was ushered into the presence of this singular friar, I requested him to present me to Louis XVIII saying that I was charged with a mission of great importance.

“ That is a thing,” replied he, “ which does not belong to my functions; that concerns M. de Blacas: Heaven preserve me from encroaching upon his rights! I should not like to get his ill-will even to serve you, handsome as you are.”

“ I am sorry for it; but I hope that M. de Blacas will not refuse to hear what I have to say and to obtain me an audience of the king.”

“ I cannot tell; he has his whims. If you

had brought with you some curious stone, something rare or valuable for its antiquity, the count would certainly receive it with pleasure ; but otherwise it is difficult to come at his highness."

I perceived from this speech that Père Elisée was not on the best terms with M. de Blacas. We had meanwhile approached the window. "There he is !" said Père Elisée, "there he is, walking between the Duke de la Châtre and the Archbishop of Rheims. The duke is a man of talent and a genteel man ; he is a faithful servant of the king's, a genuine French chevalier, equally loyal and brave, equally commendable and modest. As for Monseigneur de Talleyrand-Périgord, he has as much good-nature as his nephew has talent. He is a holy man, who scarcely ever reads any thing but the Latin of his breviary ; but, during that time at least he is not engaged in slandering others ; that is a justice which I must do him : we have all reason to speak well of him, and would to God that the Count de Blacas was like him !"

Père Elisée would have continued, but I interrupted him. "O sir !" said I, with an agitated voice, "who are those two persons yonder coming slowly this way ?"

“ That is the king and the Duchess of Angoulême.”

Louis XVIII wore that day a blue frock coat, a round hat, and large gaiters : he leant, on the one hand upon the Duchess of Angoulême, and supported himself on the other with a thick cane of ebony: a valet followed him. The Duchess of Angoulême was dressed with extreme simplicity ; she had no need of decoration or luxury to command respect for the daughter of Louis XVI. She was easily recognised by her noble and beautiful face, by her features, which bore the impress of majesty mingled with sorrow. I had been told, before this time, that in the moments when filial piety cried too loudly in her heart, she suddenly appeased the murmur of her recollections, by repeating that passage in the last will of her unfortunate father in which he forgives his enemies and his executioners. On seeing her approach, with her head sorrowfully bent over her bosom, I felt a respectful sympathy of melancholy and bitterness. At the moment when she raised her head, her intrepid look assured me that the grand-daughter of Maria Theresa could, if need were, re-conquer that throne which Marie Antoinette had lost.

I know not from what religious impulse it

was that I fell upon my knees. Père Elisée, who was a man of feeling, though a monk and a surgeon, guessed my emotion, and, as if in answer to the prayer of my heart, he launched out in praise of Louis XVIII and Madame d'Angoulême. I listened to what he said with extreme pleasure: when he had ceased speaking, I began to ask fresh questions concerning the royal family. The Count d'Artois had left Hartwell and was gone to the continent, for the purpose of inducing the sovereigns of Europe to declare in favour of the house of Bourbon. Monseigneur the Duke of Angoulême had quitted England with the same view. Monseigneur the Duke of Berry remained, agreeably to the commands of the king, his uncle, in London. There, it was said, tender ties, consecrated by the church, bound him to a charming woman; he was the father of two daughters. They are well known in France; they are equally distinguished for virtue and beauty, and those who have the honour to approach the Countess de Vierzon and the Princess de Lucinge* will not contradict me.

* It is but lately that M. de Lucinge has been enabled to prove that he is descended from Henry IV and has a right

Meanwhile I became anxious to fulfil my mission, and since I had seen the king the desire which I felt to speak to him had singularly increased. I urged Père Elisée to go to M. de Blacas and to solicit his kindness in my behalf. Père Elisée, who did not care to interfere with diplomacy, left me muttering something or other to himself. I followed him with my eyes, when he was in the garden: approaching the groupe, which then consisted of the king, the Duchess of Angoulême, M. de Talleyrand-Périgord, the Duke de la Châtre, and the Count de Blacas, he made a sign to the latter that he wished to speak to him. M. de Blacas stepped aside from the groupe; a few words were exchanged between him and Père Elisée, and my ambassador came and informed me that M. de Blacas consented to receive me. I have since learned that the count immediately acquainted the king with my arrival, and that his majesty, on hearing my father's name, which was well known to him and which I had assumed on landing in England, had ordered the count to fetch me

to the title of Prince of Savoy. The pedigree made out to support these claims is said to be a real heraldic masterpiece.

instantly. "M. de Blacas," added the king smiling, "you must tell us whether the lady is handsome: the princes of my house have never refused an audience to a pretty woman."

I was reflecting on all that I had seen for two hours past, when M. de Blacas suddenly entered the apartment where I was. The first impression which he produced upon me was not favourable: the count had a handsome face, noble and elegant manners, and quite the air of a person of distinction of the old *régime*: but, from the assurance of his gait, the loudness of his voice, and the disdainful expression of his look, it was impossible not to discover in him a second-rate courtier, rather vain of his master's favour. I never could conceive how it happened that a prince of such extraordinary intelligence as Louis XVIII bestowed all his confidence on a man of such mediocrity. M. de Châteaubriand has had the boldness to remark, in some one of his works, that kings like to choose men of mean capacity for their ministers, as if to prove that they are the living representatives of God, who can make something out of nothing. In point of talents and diplomatic ability, I place the Count de Blacas on a level with the Duke

de Polignac, and in so doing I may even be thought perhaps to wrong the latter.

The count deigned to take pity on the embarrassment into which he presumed that his presence could not fail to throw me ; he abated so much of his greatness as to be extremely gallant. I was much obliged to him for this condescension, and I let him see how deeply I was impressed by the kindness which he was pleased to shew me. But, unluckily for the noble count, I possess a rapid and unerring penetration for judging of, or rather guessing, characters ; and before we were past the preliminaries of the conversation, I knew perfectly well what sort of person I had to deal with.

I would fain have explained the object of my mission to a man more capable of comprehending me than M. de Blacas ; but, as I could do no better, I informed him of the organisation of the royalist committee ; I mentioned several persons, whose names and attachment were well known to Louis XVIII, as being at the head of that committee ; and lastly, I acquainted him with our hopes and our plans. M. de Blacas assumed a serious and important look, thrust his hand into his

waistcoat, and listened to me with imposing gravity. When I had finished, he replied, approved part of what I had told him, censured the rest, and deigned to praise my zeal and that of the other royalists ; I listened with the greatest attention, and when he had finished I added not a word ; he took my silence for a sign of my profound admiration, and seemed highly pleased ; but still he did not offer to conduct me to the king, and that was the sole object of my journey. There were things which I could not communicate to a third person, and which I should never have decided to entrust to M. de Blacas, especially since I knew so much as I did of him.

I expressed to him my wish to lay my respectful homage at the feet of the king. He replied, that his majesty's confidence had been so often abused, that he was unwilling to grant audiences to persons who were strangers to him.

“ What, Monsieur le Comte, do you then doubt the truth of what I have told you ?”

“ No, Madam ; but you must excuse me if I add, that there is nothing to prove that you are really Madame de....”

“ I hope to be able to convince you of that. Here,” said I, taking a paper from my bag,

"here is a letter adressed by his majesty to my father : I have put my signature at the bottom and my father has placed his beside it. Have the goodness, Monsieur le Comte, to present that paper to the king, and I am in hopes that, after he has looked at it, his majesty will deign to permit me to appear in his presence."

M. de Blacas could not refuse ; I stepped to the table, hastily wrote a few lines to the king, which I signed, and requested the Count to compare that signature with the one which was affixed to the letter ; he did so, seemed convinced, and retired, saying he would go and ask his majesty's commands.

As soon as I was left alone, an extreme anxiety came over me. I could not conceive why I should have so many difficulties to encounter in obtaining admission to the king, when I was provided with every requisite proof of my being an emissary of the royalists of Paris. I knew not that all these difficulties were raised by M. de Blacas, who thought by such means to increase his own importance, and to give the strangers that came to Hartwell a higher idea of the influence which he enjoyed in the little court of the exiled monarch.

A whole hour did I thus pass in the most painful agitation; at length I heard the grave and measured step of M. de Blacas. "Well, Monsieur le Comte," I exclaimed, the moment he opened the door, "what message from the king?"

"His majesty desires to see you, and he appreciates your attachment." He added that Louis XVIII remembered his own letter perfectly well, and especially the signature of my father; that he admired the courage which had led me to undertake a long and dangerous journey for his interest; lastly, that his majesty wished to see me immediately, and was waiting for me in his cabinet.

At length then I was on the point of appearing before that king whose crown was still a problem. To see Louis XVIII, I had left France, I had travelled a thousand miles on the continent, I had crossed the sea, and now that I was about to obtain that so ardently desired interview, all my courage forsook me; my heart throbbed violently; I could not breathe; I was unable to support myself; I was obliged to sit down to regain my failing strength. When I had somewhat recovered myself: "Come," said I to M. de Blacas, "I am ready to accompany you." I passed through

several apartments supporting myself upon his arm. At length we stopped; my conductor opened a door and motioned me to walk in; I entered—I was in the presence of Louis XVIII. He was seated at that deal table which he afterwards had placed in his cabinet at the Tuilleries, and which Gerard has faithfully copied in the admirable picture in which he has introduced a portrait of this prince. Overpowered by an involuntary impulse, I threw myself at the feet of the king; I wept, and was unable to speak. "There," said the king with emotion, "there is a genuine Frenchwoman! But, rise Madam," he added with gallantry, "a young and beautiful woman is not made to kneel." At the same time he made me rise and desired me to take a seat beside him. He began by talking about my father and several other of my relatives. When he saw that I had pretty well recovered from my emotion:

"Well," said he, "then they do still think of me in France?"

"You know, sire, that there are in that country persons who have never forgotten your majesty."

"It is just twenty-two years since I left it, and during that time I have not ceased for

a moment to keep my eyes turned towards France—but shall I ever see it again?"

" You will see it again, Sire," I replied with vivacity ; " your subjects hope so ; they flatter themselves that, at this moment, the allied sovereigns are exerting themselves to give to the sacred rights of legitimacy a triumph in your person."

" *Va-t'en voir s'ils viennent,*" replied he, with a melancholy gaiety. " They first exerted themselves to save their own crowns ; they are now exerting themselves to dismember France and to take each of them the province that suits them best ; the rest they will leave to the little fellow, or restore to me, according as they may deem it most advantageous to themselves. I know my dearly beloved cousins."

" Sire, you view the future condition of France under very gloomy colours."

" Madam, the future condition of France must be dreadful, if she quietly awaits the course of events ; if, on the contrary, she assumes an energetic attitude, they will be afraid of her anger, they will pay attention to what she demands with a threatening voice, and then all will go on well for me and for

those who have served me. Have you seen M. Royer Collard?"

" Yes, sire."

" He is a man of head and a man of heart. I have long known him, and I rely upon him and M. de Chateaubriand."

" Sire, he charged me most particularly to assure your majesty of his devoted attachment."

" Tell him that I read and admire his works, and that they beguile the sorrows of my exile. In my opinion, M. de Chateaubriand is the greatest writer of the age."

Louis XVIII then spoke of all the other royalists whom I had left at Paris ; he appreciated their characters with a sagacity which astonished me. He desired me to assure them, in his name, that he was grateful for all that they were doing for him and his family. " As for you, Madam," added he affectionately pressing my hand, " whether on the throne or in exile, the recollection of your courageous loyalty and that of your charming person will for ever be associated in my memory." Our conversation was continued for a long time on different subjects ; at length his majesty said to me : " I must transmit to you my instructions ;

I shall not give you any thing in writing, as I have no wish to bring you into trouble ; but this is what you will repeat in my name to those who have sent you."

He then entered into a multitude of details, which I shall not recapitulate here. Louis XVIII was far from anticipating the events which terminated the grand drama of 1814 by so sudden and so happy a *dénouement*. The instructions of the king, given in the expectation of circumstances which did not take place, could not be carried into execution ; it would be therefore useless to lay them before the reader.

CHAPTER VIII.

Particulars concerning Louis XVIII.—Conversation which I had with him respecting the literati and artists.—His dictionary.—My departure from Hartwell.—My return to France.—My visits.—My conversation with the Prince de Talleyrand.—A conversation with the Duke of Rovigo.—M. Lainé.—M. Flaugergues.—M. Raynouard.—Maria Louisa.

IT will be seen, from what I have said, that the court of Hartwell had its petty internal intrigues, its petty cabals, and its petty jealousies of courtiers. A philosopher would here indulge in a long dissertation on the vanity of human ambition; but I shall proceed with my narrative.

When I had submitted to the king all that related to my secret mission, I expressed a wish to present my homage to her royal highness Madame. I then learned that this princess had just set out for London, with the Duke de La Châtre, with a view to prevail upon the regent to declare himself frankly in favour of legitimacy. This was a disappointment to me. The king perceived that I was vexed, and endeavoured by increased atten-

tions to make me forget the absence of his beloved niece. We conversed together the whole day in the most delightful intimacy, and from those moments I may date the influence which I obtained over the mind of the king. I had the felicity to please him; he told me so, and this assurance, which, in some measure, recompensed my attachment, bound me in future to neglect nothing to promote his cause: there is royalism at the bottom of every female heart.

Louis XVIII maintained, in his precarious situation, that tranquillity which can proceed only from a superior mind. His conversation was gay, nay even somewhat free, but withal so graceful, that the most sensitive virtue would not have taken alarm at it. I was surprised at all that he told me respecting France, and especially concerning the imperial court. He knew its strong and its weak points, the great and the little, and it was not without secret mortification that he saw figuring at it the descendants of the ancient servants of the monarchy, the Montmorencys, the Rohans, the Beauvaus, the Mortemarts, the Talleyrands, the Croys, the Choiseuls, the Montesquious, the Noailles, the Gontauts, the Gramonts, the La Rochefoucaulds; and, among the ladies at-

tached to the Empresses Josephine, and Maria Louisa, the Countesses Victor de Mortemart, de Montmorency, de Bouillé, Edmond de Perigord, de Beauvau, de Colbert, de Segur, Just de Noailles, &c. Ever since the commencement of the revolution, Louis XVIII had been forming a biographical dictionary of all the persons who acted a conspicuous part in France; and as soon as a new actor appeared upon the political stage he gave him a place in his dictionary. He was apprised of all the proceedings of these persons, either by the newspapers or by the reports transmitted to him by his agents: so that, when he returned to the Tuilleries, there was not an individual who was unknown to him, and he might have thrown in the face of each of them all the particulars of his life.

He did not confine his observations to people of quality and military and diplomatic men; he conversed with me also about literati and artists. He shewed me in his little library the Ossian and the Omasis of M. Baour-Lormian, beside the works of Delille. He had on his table the translation of the Odes of Horace by Count Daru. "It is not possible," said he to me, "to translate an untranslateable poet with more taste and fidelity." He talked to me

also about the *Génie de l'Homme* by Chênedolé; Esmenard's poem *La Navigation*; the Tales of Andrieux, the philosopher; Duval's dramas, and Picard's comedies. He laughed heartily in quoting a revolutionary play by the latter, in which the author of *Les Visitandines* gave him a part, and represented him as coming out of a pasty: I have forgotten the title of it. He appreciated the various merits of these gentlemen with great tact and accuracy. He was anxious to make himself acquainted with the superior talent of Girodet; he prized that of Gérard; he had a good notion of Prudhon's and Guerin's; and he regretted that the political errors of David prevented his doing full justice to that great painter. In short, I ascertained that Louis XVIII, in his exile, paid serious attention to all that concerned the glory and the genius of France.

The length of our conference tormented the Count de Blacas beyond endurance. He found a dozen motives for interrupting it; he came back, said what he had to say and went away again. His Majesty at length desired him to stay; he sent for Père Elisée also, and the conversation was continued by us four. The king did me the honour to invite me to his table. During the dessert, I sung a song at his

desire, and Louis XVIII sung with much humour that of the Marquis de Champanas, so well known before the revolution.

This day passed for me in a continual enchantment. The whole of the following night I was unable to sleep. Too many things kept my imagination awake ; too many anxieties disturbed my heart. It had been agreed that I should not see the king again till I should see him in France. Could I hope to see him again ? Fain would I have staid with him to charm his exile, since he had told me that I pleased him ; and yet his service, his interest, reason, duty, every consideration, called me back to France. It was necessary that I should depart, that I should return to my native land without him ; but it was for his sake, and this thought inspired me with courage.

Next morning very early, some one knocked at the door of my room. I was already up and dressed, for I meant to write to the king before I left him. The Count de Blacas and Père Elisée entered ; the latter was to conduct me to my carriage, to make the household believe that it was him and no one else whom I had come to see. The count was commissioned to compliment me on behalf of Louis XVIII, and to present me in his name with

a gold ring. This trinket was of inestimable value to me, being surrounded by a wreath formed of the king's hair and Madame's. I put it on my finger, vowing at the same time that death itself should not part me from it. I delivered my letter to M. de Blacas, requesting him to express to the king the regret that I felt at leaving him: nevertheless, I left Hartwell happier and more contented than I had arrived there, because now I was sure that I had secured the favour of its august inmate.

On my voyage back I had the honour of a storm; my vessel, however, carried besides me the fortune of Cæsar, and reached Havre-de-Grâce without accident. I found my friends wavering between fear and hope. The allied armies had already passed the frontiers; several parts of the French territory were already invaded.

Meanwhile I arrived at Paris. Every body hastened to me to learn what news I brought. "Nothing," said I; "they know no more at Hartwell than we do at Paris. The allies themselves are in the same ignorance; they will act according to circumstances. They will be for or against us, according as they are guided by interest or the wants of the

moment, unless France contributes herself to the return of the king."

After this exordium, I strove to enkindle in every heart the same enthusiastic love which I felt myself for the royal family. I called to see Mesdames de Choiseul, de Semalé, de Monlezun, de Soyecourt, de Vauvineux, de Rohan, the Duchess de Duras, the Duchess de Mailly, Madame Dubois-Delamotte, Madame de Fars, Madame de l'Hôpital, a Madame Dorval, the greatest and perhaps the most unhappy royalist in France; the Prince de Leon, the Vicomte de Châteaubriand, Monsieur and Madame de Rippert, Messrs. de Lostange, de Levis, d'Hautefort, de Quinsonnas, de Montmorency, de Montaignac, de Tholozan, Royer-Collard, Becquey, Bellart, Seguier, de Mailly, Royou, de Perigord, de Luxembourg, Michaud, Lacretelle junior, in short every body.

Immediately after my return, the Prince de Talleyrand called and left his name. In a few days he wrote to request me to call upon him; I complied with his invitation. He had just returned from the palace, where Napoleon had been in a violent rage with him. He was under such apprehension of being arrested, that he seemed to have lost that tranquillity

of mind which in general does not forsake him. Will it be believed that he thought to outwit me, and took round-about ways to come at my secret? His paltry tricks at length made me angry. "Monseigneur," said I to him, "I dislike by-roads; I go straight forward to the point. Put confidence in me, and I will in you: tell me your plans and I will tell you mine." It was in vain; M. de Talleyrand continued to harangue in a diplomatic style. I could endure it no longer, and by way of punishing him: "Monseigneur," cried I, tolerably loud, "I am just come from Hartwell, I have seen the king and he desired me to say" his highness would not suffer me to finish. He drew back affrighted to the farther end of his cabinet, looking round on all sides with a comic terror, to see whether I might not have been overheard. Then stepping up to me: "Mad creature that you are," said he, "have you lost your senses? Ah! you have seen him then," added he in a low tone; "well, I am his most humble servant. And how is my uncle?"

"Very well; and he assures me that he prays to Heaven every day for your conversion."

The diplomatist laughed at the epigram. He

then said : " You must leave me. I am in a very ticklish situation ; I do not wish to draw you into it too ; we shall see each other again, if I can get happily out of it."

" Oh Monseigneur !" I replied, " your highness—excuse the comparison—is like the camel in the New Testament ; you would pass through the eye of a needle if it was absolutely necessary." I thereupon quitted M. de Talleyrand.

Two days afterwards I received a visit from the Duke of Rovigo. He knew every thing : at least he knew enough to appear to know every thing. He said to me : " You have been at the grand chamberlain's ?"

" Yes, your excellency, as I go to your house when you have an evening party."

" But you have been there in the day-time ?"

" That is true."

" It was a visit then that you paid him ?"

" He did me the honour to call at my house, and I returned his civility."

" You have made a singular journey ; you are come back very speedily cured."

" To tranquillize you then I ought I suppose to have returned ill."

" A gust of wind threw you upon the English coast."

“ I do not deny it.”

“ You landed.”

“ I was dreadfully sea-sick.”

“ You took a post-chaise.”

“ I was not ordered to travel on foot.”

“ And you have been at Hartwell.”

“ And you, no doubt, are come to tell me that I am to sleep to-night in the Temple.”

“ What a horrible notion you have of me! I ought to denounce you, and I will defend you. But, how imprudent you have been! was it befitting you, I ask, to play the part of messenger to a parcel of drivellers?”

“ Ah! Monsieur le Duc, you think very meanly of the most intelligent persons in France.”

“ Hark ye,” replied the duke, with a tone of frankness which delighted me, “ listen to a sincere friend. The government has agents every where. I was informed of your landing in England, and of your visit to Hartwell; you first saw Père Elisée, then M. de Blacas, and then the Count de Lille. The latter has given you no written instructions, but he made you a present of this ring.”

“ Indeed, I cannot but pity a prince who is so unfortunate as to be subject in his retirement to such a cruel *surveillance*. There are traitors then about him?”

“ Where are there not ? ” replied the duke with a sarcastic smile. “ Am I not one myself, since I leave you to conspire at perfect liberty against my master who is my benefactor ? ”

“ Your master, duke, is not here : he is yonder. Be assured that if you would return to him and serve him in these circumstances.....”

“ You will not succeed, madam ; you will not have the glory of gaining over to your side a minister of the emperor’s ; not but that I am full of respect for the person of the Count de Lille and for his august family ; I call God to witness that I wish them no harm. But I have had my share in a fatal act : however, I am almost innocent of it. The guilty person is he who, in an unexpected change, will receive the most honour.”

The duke then told me that, in giving an account of the proceedings of the royalists to his majesty, he had ventured to suppress the episode of my mission, but he was fearful that other reports would injure me in the estimation of the emperor.

I gave myself no concern on that subject. Napoleon no longer seemed formidable to me ; he appeared to be hurried along to his ruin by a spirit of imprudence which one would not have suspected in a head like his. He had just

brutally cashiered the legislative body, and after committing his wife and child to the national guard, he set off to tempt, for the last time, that fortune which had forsaken him.

It was on this occasion that I became acquainted with Messieurs Lainé, Flaugergues, Raynouard, and Maine de Biran. M. Lainé was already what he has since proved himself, one of the ablest and most upright men that modern France has to boast of. He has in him less ambition than vanity. A philosopher in regard to wealth, he paid little attention to his private interest ; he is the only one of the king's ministers, who, belonging to the class of the commonalty, has not solicited a patent of nobility. He suffered himself subsequently to be created a viscount, but only because it is necessary to have a title in order to enter the chamber of peers. M. Lainé has something Roman about him, though he is a downright Frenchman. I have heard it said of him that he is a sentimental liberal : it is true enough, that he is equally attached to the monarchy and to liberty, and would never serve one at the expense of the other. A learned lawyer, a profound public writer, an eloquent orator, he speaks well, because he thinks still better ; he has no difficulty to convince, because he is

himself persuaded. His high qualities will perhaps bring him back to the head of affairs: the greatest obstacle is his own indecision; some honest man's scruple is always checking him; he knows not how to will when the question concerns himself. At this period M. Lainé thought little of the Bourbons; his only love for them was the hatred which he felt for Bonaparte; but his opposition, founded entirely on principle, was on that account the more formidable to the imperial government.

M. Flaugergues, formerly tribune, I believe, and afterwards sub-prefect of one of the *arrondissements* of the Aveyron, where he had a little quarrel with the prefect, M. Goyon, was a great talker and nothing more; he was one of those persons who are always making a noise; he was incessantly bustling about and bawling with might and main. All this din promised more than the man was capable of performing. I never could think of M. Flaugergues, without being reminded of the fable of the mountain which brought forth a mouse.

M. Raynouard, formerly a lawyer in Provence, member of the legislative body, has all the petulant frankness of the southerns. An eminent poet, a profound philologist, he has found means to create for himself genuine

independence, that which consists in having few wants. His veracity is rather blunt in its manner; his air has been thought too *bourgeois* to make him a peer of France, and he himself early relinquished all political pretensions. As a parliamentary orator he would have made a better report than speech. In literature he is become somewhat antiquated, and since 1814 he has been rather the manager of the Academy than the poet of the *Templiers*; but it will never be forgotten how nobly he has recently resigned the place of perpetual secretary to the French Academy. This sacrifice, which drew a murmur from his economy, cost his delicacy not a sigh; he preferred more independence and six thousand francs less. Such conduct is too rare at the present day for me not to make honourable mention of it.

The allies were meanwhile advancing into the country. In vain did Napoleon oppose them with unshaken firmness and the wrecks of his army; he had no longer room for hope. Every battle that he won swept away his best soldiers; every success that he gained accelerated his ruin. The events of that memorable campaign are universally known; I shall not amuse myself with here recapitulating so

many achievements, but refer the reader to the pictures of Horace Vernet.

Maria Louisa was declared regent. This choice of Napoleon's proclaimed the embarrassment in which he found himself. He could not have committed a greater error. Maria Louisa possessed all the domestic qualities of the princesses of her house ; she was in her family the best of women ; all those who were about her agree in praising her : she loved her father, her husband, her son, as any tradesman's wife might do ; but she had none of those lofty qualities which her consort expected of her in the critical circumstances in which the empire was placed. She had no energy, no will ; never would she have had the courage to mount a horse like the Duchess of Angoulême ; never would she have entered Bordeaux.

If the emperor conceived that, in giving his confidence to Maria Louisa, he gave her at the same time the talents requisite for answering it : he was egregiously mistaken. She turned the sceptre into a distaff, which she twirled in concert with her brothers-in-law and the grand dignitaries of the crown. She had indeed superior men in her council, but there

was not one of them who could appreciate her situation, not one who could give even a sensible piece of advice. I ought to add that Napoleon had so completely stifled all independence that there was not one of his creatures who could do any thing without his orders; and he was not there to give them.

We royalists reckoned upon this. I must nevertheless confess, that there were not many brave men among us: there were too many men of wit. Such as these know too well what danger is to brave it. I am here advancing only a general rule, which, like all the rules in the world, has its exceptions. Thus M. de Châteaubriand dared to write amidst the spies of the imperial police his admirable pamphlet on "Bonaparte and the Bourbons," which, seasonably circulated, contributed not a little to the restoration, for which it was in some measure the grand trumpet signal.

CHAPTER IX.

The discontented of the empire.—Political conduct of M. de Talleyrand.—His foresight.—The arch-chancellor.—Joseph.—Jerome.—Count de Montalivet.—Intrigue of Talleyrand's.—The Duke of Rovigo.—The Sybarites of the empire.—Royalist ladies.—Matthieu de Montmorency.—Leo de Levis.—Baron de Vitrolles.—Royalist directing committee.—The Duke of Dalberg.—The Marquis de Jaucourt.—Count Beurnonville.—The Abbé de Montesquiou.

I HAVE already stated in the preceding chapter that Napoleon committed the regency to the empress and that he gave her a council composed of the grand dignitaries of the crown to assist her. But the emperor had not made any provision in his instructions, in case the allies, declaring him deposed, should call another prince to the throne of France in his stead. This was a circumstance which he could not have contemplated, or it would have been an unpardonable improvidence on his part. But he had become habituated by degrees to believe in his legitimacy, as if he had really been the natural and direct heir of Charlemagne.

How much more dangerous was his situation rendered, when the activity of those to whom he had given cause of discontent conspired with the weakness of his incapable counsellors to his ruin !

The Prince de Talleyrand must be placed at the head of those who had the greatest interest in the overthrow of the imperial power, and who, with insatiable ambition and great talents, being never content with their present position, care little about convulsing empires in order to attain the object of their hopes. From court-abbé having turned statesman, M. de Talleyrand had shewn himself by turns the devoted servant of absolute royalty and the partisan of constitutional royalty. He had first supported the directory and afterwards overthrown it, and he had, as it were, given a hand to Bonaparte to conduct him to the consulship and to the empire. In vain had the latter, in acknowledgment for so important a service, conferred on him the titles of grand-chamberlain and prince: this was not enough for M. de Talleyrand; he would fain have been something more, and despairing to obtain what he yet wanted, he forgot what he had already obtained, and at length conspired against the emperor.

Notwithstanding the address with which M. de Talleyrand usually conducted his political intrigues, Napoleon was no stranger to the secret practices of the ex-Bishop of Autun. He would have ordered him to be arrested on the day when he treated him so roughly at the Tuileries, but he was dissuaded from it by the Duke of Rovigo

and Prince Cambaceres. It must be confessed that those gentlemen rendered an essential service to our cause without knowing and doubtless without meaning it; and we had great cause to congratulate ourselves that Napoleon had not followed up his original intention.

The more M. de Talleyrand had reason to be afraid, the less he felt disposed to remain in the perilous disgrace into which he had fallen. He knew better than any body in the world how difficult it is to lull suspicion when it is once awakened; he had no doubt that the strict eye of Napoleon would be incessantly fixed upon his conduct, and a sensible man like him had no great fancy for being sent on a tour to Vincennes. He vowed thenceforward not to take a moment's rest till he had accomplished the downfall of the emperor. The thing was no longer so very difficult. In vain did the emperor, deluded by some successes, believe himself to be still a sovereign at Montmirail, as he had formerly been at Austerlitz; in vain did he pretend, in order to deceive himself, to dictate his imperious laws to foreigners encamped within twenty leagues of his capital; his hour had struck: the imperial diadem insensibly detached itself from his brow.

The ex-Bishop of Autun nevertheless prudently kept quiet so long as there was not a certainty of success; but, when a series of events

hastened the ruin of his master, and taught him that the hour to act was come, he roused himself from his apparent stupor. The friends of Napoleon, on their part, to judge from their indecision, appeared to be scarcely more attached to his interests.

Prince Cambaceres, arch-chancellor of the empire, was an upright and honourable man, a good lawyer, obliging, nay even amiable, when he forgot to play the prince; he possessed all the qualities requisite for his high functions; yes all, excepting that which at the moment was most important—courage. He had a religious faith in Bonaparte, which prevented his putting any trust in his own strength: he would have deemed it criminal to decide before he knew the will of the emperor; he would have deemed himself worthy of condemnation to adopt of himself a vigorous decision which would have saved the empire. Besides, knowing better how to wield the pen than the sword, he was not conversant in questions which it was necessary to discuss at the point of the latter.

His natural cowardice had increased with his habits of luxury and effeminacy: he was the Epicurean of the new court. Satire had assailed him on the very steps of the imperial throne; he had enjoyed the privilege of inspiring songs any thing but respectful on the subject of his

tastes and his friendships. Thanks to him, political caricature still survived in 1814; his name alone calls up a host of satellites or grotesque familiars, worthy of the pencil of Callot or Monnier.

Prince Joseph Bonaparte—who knew not how to be either king of Spain, or king of Naples, and had seen in royalty nothing but the pleasures which it affords—Prince Joseph was able to teach Maria Louisa how to lose a crown, but not how to preserve one. Though not so good a lawyer as Cambaceres, Joseph knew no more of war than he did; he had never seen fire but at a distance; he was neither a soldier nor a general. What was he to do in circumstances that demanded so much genius and courage? How could Bonaparte be so improvident as to entrust the supreme command to a mere parade sovereign?

Jerome, that other comedy king, seemed, like Joseph, to have come into the world solely to serve for a foil to the extraordinary talents of Bonaparte: he had studied nothing more of the part of a king than the aristocratic pleasures which are its attributes. That which he regretted most of his greatness was perhaps the costume: he has been known to take delight in dressing himself up in his tinsel, and admiring himself all alone before a mirror.

Count Regnault de St Jean d'Angely, a man of talent, of quick conception, and inconceivably rapid in transacting business, had been for some time too much spoiled by Fortune to preserve his composure when the fickle dame appeared disposed to forsake him. He was extremely capable of directing a portion of the administration ; but his shoulders were probably too weak to support the weight of that of all France. Having been accustomed, like the other great dignitaries of the empire to receive inspirations from Bonaparte on all subjects and in all places, he was quite at a loss how to act when these inspirations failed him.

Neither were the Count de Montalivet, the Duke of Rovigo, and some others whom I shall not name, better qualified for the then circumstances. Their minds had been tempered by prosperity and not by adversity. Tossed by the tempest which suddenly burst upon them, their hearts failed them as well as fortune.

The Prince de Talleyrand had a thorough knowledge of the persons whom he had to deal with ; he had long formed his estimate of them. He knew that to scare away the little spirit they had left, he needed but to frighten them ; and to frighten them he immediately fell to work. One evening, at night-fall he came to my house ; I was alone. "I am come," said he, "to beg you

to do an important service for me, and more particularly, I tell you beforehand, for those to whom you are attached."

"Explain yourself," I replied.

"The business is this: I have a letter to deliver to you from your brother who is serving in the allied army; let the Duke of Rovigo read it; that is all I ask of you."

The hand-writing of this letter certainly looked like my brother's; and yet I doubted for a moment whether it was his.

"But for what purpose am I to shew it to the Duke of Rovigo?"

"For the purpose of serving our legitimate princes: the empress must absolutely quit Paris; if the foreigners find her here at their entry, all will be lost. The emperor Alexander, who is more gallant than politic, will be eager to lay his sword at the feet of Maria Louisa and to declare her regent; the Emperor of Austria will be unwilling to deprive his grandson of his inheritance, and if we escape these we know not exactly into whose hands we shall fall."

"But pray, Prince, what is this letter to do?"

"It is to frighten the Duke of Rovigo, and he will frighten Maria Louisa, her brother-in-law, the arch-chancellor, M. Lebrun, and the rest of them."

"You, frighten the Duke of Rovigo? how

can you expect to do that? he is a man of courage."

" Yes, on the field of battle; but not in the cabinet. Have you forgotten how, eighteen months ago, Mallet, Guidal, and Lahorie, succeeded in making him Duke of *La Force*? we shall now be equally successful: the recollection of the death of the Duke d'Enghien will induce him to propose some prudent measure. Be easy, I know my man; I am not to be frightened by big words and long mustaches."

Having said this, the Prince de Talleyrand departed, leaving me a letter from my brother, which was as follows :

" My dear sister,

" We are coming, and, with the assistance of God, the banner of the lilies will soon replace the odious tri-coloured standard. We are coming, with the determination to purge France of the murderers of the royal family. For my part, I have sworn to tie the assassins of the Duke d'Enghien to my horse's tail. They shall have no mercy: their death alone can appease the manes of the immolated hero. All our friends are actuated by the same sentiments as myself: woe to the wretch that shall first fall into our hands!"
&c. &c.

I hastened to write to General Savary, re-

questing him to call upon me, as I had an important paper to shew him. The general was all police from head to foot; he had no doubt that I had some revelation to make, and came without delay to see me.

M. de Rovigo, without possessing elegant forms, is what is called a fine man. He has a confidence in himself which his conduct does not justify. He was an excellent minister of the police, because that post under the empire required more devotedness than genius. The duke cherishes ambitious notions when he ought to have nothing but resignation. He calls up recollections of the past, when he ought only to solicit its oblivion. He had succeeded ill in his apology as a pamphlet: he has since made eight thick volumes of it. In vain did I endeavour to dissuade him from this; he would not listen to me: he conceived himself obliged to inform posterity of his deeds and achievements; but while he is waiting for posterity, his contemporaries have universally hooted him. What has particularly struck me in this personage, is the total want of judgment. He conceives that his assertion can counterbalance the authority of a hundred authentic documents. The reason of this is, that he has no knowledge of things; he must be forgiven because..... I shall not finish the sentence.

He came accordingly to my house. "Well, Madam," said he, on entering, "the approach

of danger then has made a Frenchwoman of you. What confession have you to make? You will be sure to gain the good graces of the emperor." Without replying, I handed him my letter; he read it, read it a second, and a third time. "Upon my word," said he, "these are horrible designs. Those people are excessively blood-thirsty. They are coming then to involve the innocent and the guilty in one general proscription. But will they come?"

"Do you doubt it?"

"The emperor is there: he has doubled his army; all the departments are arming; the enthusiasm is universal, and the coalition will soon be annihilated.

"Duke of Rovigo, spare yourself the trouble of repeating to me an official bulletin. There is no longer either army or enthusiasm: all that was left behind in the snows of Russia. Your emperor is lost; in three days the allies will be in Paris, and woe be those who fall under their wrath!"

"Yes, I dare say there will be more wrath than justice; but I shall nevertheless do my duty."

Notwithstanding this apparent firmness of the Duke's, I soon perceived, in the course of the conversation, that if the empress and the kings, her brothers-in-law, wished to quit Paris, he

would not oppose their departure. The poor duke was really afraid of the fate with which he was threatened. What surprised me most, that day, was his profound indifference for *his master*, *who was his benefactor*. It is well known that in 1814 he did not find a quarter of an hour to bestow on the misfortunes of Napoleon.

When he was gone, I took it into my head to do more than M. de Talleyrand had asked me, and to make a double use of the pretended letter for the service of the king. I went to Prince Cambaceres, whom I found already very uneasy respecting the turn of affairs; he was still more alarmed when I had shewn him my brother's letter. He begged me, if the king should return, to assure him of his respect and submission. He wished also that his vote might be forgotten, though in fact it cannot be counted among those of the regicides. In short, Prince Cambaceres appeared to me ready to accommodate himself to any thing, provided he were suffered to enjoy his fortune in quiet and to take his four meals a day without molestation.

His familiars were not less alarmed than himself. At the head of these gentlemen, I shall name d'Aigrefeuille, the *Coryphæus* of this sybarite court, who was so fond of good cheer, and who employed the time of digestion in reflecting on what he had eaten. He was a man

as remarkable for rotundity as his patron ; but, it must be confessed that under this gastronomic exterior he possessed an excellent understanding and great originality.

Messieurs de Lavollée, Monvel, the Marquis de Villevieille, Fesquet, Noel, and all the courtiers of the prince, contemplated the fall of their Amphitryon with faces a yard long. They wandered about in the hotel, with pale and starved look, as if they had had nothing to eat for three days. Perhaps they were already preparing to bid farewell to fallen power, and to carry their complaisance and their appetites to new patrons.

We were on the eve of deliverance : the Viscount de Chateaubriand put the finishing hand to his admirable pamphlet on " Bonaparte and the Bourbons," a work which was circulated before the arrival of the allies. In this there was real courage. As for me, who am also brave in my way, I offered my services to circulate it; I went backward and forward, and goaded on all my people like a gad-fly. There were a great number of us females at work making white cockades and embroidering white flags. We met together and sung in chorus the song of Nina : *Quand le bien-aimé reviendra* ; we were sure that the beloved would not be long before he returned ; but it was necessary to strike a

last blow at the power which was already tottering, by raising the people against it.

The Viscount Matthieu de Montmorency, and his cousin the Viscount Thibault, put themselves at the head of this insurrection. It was agreed that, on the day that the allies should enter Paris, a number of royalists assembled in the *Place Louis XV* should hoist the flag of the monarchy, on the same spot where twenty one years before the monarchy had fallen with the head of Louis XVI. Other loyal persons were to repair to other quarters of Paris to promote the counter-revolution; among these worthies I shall name the young and handsome Leo de Levis, who combines the amiableness of the French chevaliers with the hereditary bravery of his noble race. Never have I witnessed enthusiasm equal to that of this young man. I verily believe that he would have given his life to accelerate by one quarter of an hour the triumph of the good cause.

We had in our party a very extraordinary personage, the Baron de Vitrolles. The impetuosity of his language, the vehemence of his gestures, a sort of royalist fanaticism which he assumed on great occasions, had recommended him to us. He hated Napoleon with a cordiality which prepossessed us in his favour. He bustled about, talked, shouted, and was deter-

mined by any means to give himself an importance, which he lost unfortunately as soon as he became better known. The royalist directing committee entrusted him with the delicate mission of enquiring the real intention of the allies. M. de Vitrolles ruined his credit with them by his Provençal boasting and his inefficiency. It was then clearly perceived that excessive vanity is not talent, and that pompous words are not the heralds of great actions. I shall fall in with him again in 1815; for the present there is enough and perhaps too much respecting him.

The royalist directing committee, which I have just mentioned, existed, but so well wrapped up in its incognito, that it was not discovered till after the restoration. The five members who composed it had given to themselves their full powers.

The first was the Prince de Talleyrand, the second the Duke of Dalberg, whom some persist in believing to be not quite innocent of the murder of the Duke d'Enghien. If the Duke of Dalberg had possessed any talents he might have raised himself very high; he has been entrusted with important parts which he has performed like a double. If circumstances do a great deal for men, it is requisite on the other

hand that men should be on a level with circumstances.

There is, for instance, the duke of Dalberg, who at the commencement of this century was in a magnificent position: and yet he will be utterly unknown to posterity. What do I say? to him perhaps we are already posterity, for we know not for certain whether he is dead or living.

The third member of the committee was the Marquis de Jaucourt, a military man, a statesman, a man of the world, a little of every thing; but not enough to put himself at the head of a great revolution. For the rest, his intentions were good; that is the best that can be said of him. He was sensible that the Bourbons were necessary to the happiness of France, and though he had at first gone along with the revolutionary torrent, we forgave his ancient errors on account of his new opinions.

The fourth was the Count de Beurnonville, who began with being an abbé and finished by becoming a marshal of France: few abbés can boast of so splendid a career. He possessed valour and science: he was beloved by his soldiers and esteemed by his enemies. He had passed one half of his life at the head of armies and the other half in the solitude of a dungeon;

but he was almost forgotten when he returned to public life. It must be confessed too that all the high reputations of the republic were lost in the senate.

The fifth member of this mysterious committee, of which the provisional government was a few days afterwards composed, was the Abbé de Montesquiou-Fezensac. The conduct of this noble abbé in the constituent assembly had been very equivocal ; he had not shewn himself there either a frank republican or a faithful royalist, but ready to be either the one or the other according to circumstances. Never, though he expressed himself with a certain elegance, never will he be reckoned among the good speakers of that assembly. He had himself no faith in what he said, and it would have been very difficult to produce in others a conviction which he had not. He possessed, nevertheless, a sort of reputation ; and as he was a handsome man and not deficient in intelligence, we women made him among us a great statesman. He was at a loss for something to do, the dear abbé, and by way of dispelling his *ennui* he amused himself with conspiring. I say *amused* himself, for they were not brutal conspiracies, like those of George and Mallet, but conspiracies of good company, which, planned amidst the chit-chat of a drawing-room, did not pass beyond the ante-

chamber. We all swore only by the handsome abbé; and we served him so well that Louis XVIII was not afraid to entrust him with the most ample powers. M. de Montesquiou accepted them, handed them over to his secretary, and then went to sleep; for he is a great sleeper as I shall shew by and by—the only point in which he resembles the good La Fontaine. M. de Talleyrand, playing the part of Bertrand with Raton, let M. de Montesquiou go before, while circumstances were attended with any danger, intending afterwards to demand a recompence for himself. This was artful enough.

CHAPTER X.

Decline of the imperial star.—Joseph.—Jerome.—M. de Talleyrand prepares himself for events.—The senate.—Languinais.—Count Dembarrère.—Barthélémy.—Fabre (de l'Aude).—Count de Pontecoulant.—M. de Fontanes.—Cardinal de Bayane.—The 30th of March.—M. de Vauvineux.—Sosthène de la Rochefoucauld.—Cambaceres.—Count Corneil.—Distribution of white cockades.—Movements in various directions.—First cry of *Vive le Roi!*

MEANWHILE a mightier power than that of the royalists accelerated the new destinies of France. The allies, led by the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, were already under the

walls of Paris. Napoleon had left but a weak garrison in that city, and the chiefs whom he had appointed only waited for the first cannon-shot to betake themselves to flight. They were full of consternation respecting the future, and M. de Talleyrand, treating them like true Gérontes, took no pains to tranquillize them: on the contrary, he had recourse to false communications, insidious advice, in short every thing, and applied them, according to circumstances, with that skill which he so eminently possesses. King Joseph, whom he had convinced that it was the intention of the allies to deliver him up, bound hand and foot, to the King of Spain, knew not where to hide his wretched head. In the embarrassment in which he then was, he would have thanked a thousand times any one who should have come to inform him that his life would be spared. King Joseph, therefore, was in a hurry to be gone. King Jerome, though less frightened than his brother, was also for a retreat; and the Duke of Rovigo himself, notwithstanding what he has written in his Memoirs, the Duke of Rovigo also voted in favour of departure.

A council was held: some of the members, assuming a martial air, proposed to remain; but they well knew that a letter from the emperor, a letter dictated by despair, imperatively com-

manded them to remove beyond the reach of the allies the empress and the Astyanax of the empire—the young King of Rome—to whom such high destinies were predicted in his cradle.

Certainly this was the moment, or there never was one, for disobeying the emperor, but also for taking one of those sudden resolutions which are capable of saving thrones. Fear had paralysed all minds. Maria Louisa was utterly incapable of deciding upon any thing of herself, as if it was of little consequence to her whether she lived at Paris or at Vienna, whether she was empress or again became archduchess; besides, she had in her favour so many abdications in her own time, which set her an example. All her husband's brothers had tried on the royal dress merely to strip it off again, like a livery, at the first order of their master.

It was therefore resolved to depart: the Prince of Benevent informed me of this by M. de F.... of Montpellier, a low fellow, who owes to his blind devotedness on this occasion his barony, his cross, and his pensions. He sent me word that he, the Prince of Benevent, should remain, but that it was of importance to our plans that others should remain with him; he therefore requested me to call upon several of the senators, as well in his name as in my own, and gave me full power to compromise him. He well knew

—the arch-fox—that he should not be compromised; but he wished to have the air of braving pretended dangers, that he might afterwards obtain a double recompence for his services.

I knew several members of the conservative senate: these gentlemen, all honourable men individually, formed collectively the most servile assembly that ever was; never, no never, did the Roman senate, of which so many mean things are related, furnish an example of such servility, even in the worst times of Rome. Not a single act of honourable opposition can be mentioned in favour of our conservative senate, during the fourteen years of its existence. It was not only content to pay a blind obedience to all the wishes of the ruler, whatever they might be, but seemed to be incessantly demanding an increase of despotism. There were, nevertheless in that body, eminent, nay perhaps virtuous men; but all that can be said in their behalf is that their virtue slumbered.

I saw Lanjuinais, the Breton, who, notwithstanding his momentary weakness, excused by circumstances, was a worthy citizen. He was not afraid, both before and since, to proclaim the noblest principles and to take up the defence of those institutions, upon which Louis XVIII deemed it right to found the liberty of the nation and the perpetuity of the throne.

I saw Count Dembarrère, an esteemed general and a prudent man, who, wishing well to his country, and no longer expecting of Napoleon the fulfilment of his wishes, placed his last hope on the return of the Bourbons.

I saw M. Barthélemy, formerly a member of the directory, who had never ceased to love the Bourbons, even at the time when he participated in power; his qualities as a private man and some administrative talents gained him universal esteem. It was he who directed the senate into a track of independence in which it was greatly astonished to find itself.

I saw M. de Fontanes, the Mæcenas of the imperial literature; he had more skill than talent, more ingenuity than knowledge; by means of a few phrases cleverly combined, he had found means to pass himself off for a contemner of Napoleon, whom he lauded with a ridiculous exaggeration; very little is now left of the reputation which he once enjoyed.

I saw also the Cardinal de Bayane, who, in the quality of ecclesiastic, expected much more of the Bourbons than of Bonaparte. Count Fabre, a good financier, who had performed high functions without making his fortune, and whose attachment to the royal family had outlasted the republic and the empire; and the Count de Pontecoulant, an old friend of my father's, from

whom experience had not taken the intrepidity of youth, and for whom the highest posts would be less a favour than a reward. My visits, upon the whole, were not useless; I found every where an extreme weariness of the then state of things, and a strong desire of a change.

On the morning of the 30th of March, M. de Vauvineux came running into my apartment. "Well," said he, giving me a royalist kiss on each cheek, "they are gone. The only one left is master Joseph, and he will soon follow the others. The place will then be our own. Come along, my dear Countess, *Vive le Roi!* and down with the usurper!"

Meanwhile, Sosthene de la Rochefoucauld came in; he was then a very amiable young man, agreeable, obliging, without ostentation, and thinking rather of soliciting the patronage of others than of acting the part of patron himself. His favour had not yet excited envy; a Turk was not then mounted behind his cabriolet; he did not then wear canary-yellow small-clothes, nor did he think of lengthening the petticoats of the opera-dancers: and, after all, these are the most serious charges that can be alleged against him. He laughs at them, as Alcibiades laughed at the cockneys of Athens, who criticised the docked tail of his dog.

He called then at my house; he informed me

that the Duke of Ragusa was capitulating, that Paris was about to be evacuated, and that he had just witnessed the flight of Joseph Bonaparte. M. de Vauvineux, as well as Messrs. Leo de Levis, the Marquis de Louvois, Charles de Nieuwerkerke, Count d'Adhemar, and Count de Kergorlay, who presently afterwards came in, all promised to declare themselves on the following day, the 31st of March.

For my part, wrapped in an enormous pelisse, and taking the arm of one of our best royalists, M. de B.... I walked through different quarters of the town, to judge of the spirit which actuated the people. I found every where a sullen consternation, the result of uncertainty; but nothing that we heard was unfavourable to the crisis that was preparing. We met M. de Lavibois, who for a moment had feared the return of Napoleon, but had all his apprehensions removed by one of the partisans of the emperor himself. I wish I could relate all that passed on that day; I must confess, more than one loyal man trembled. There were two persons, Messrs. de C.... and de P...., who in the space of twenty-four hours mounted the white cockade and put it off again three or four times.

At eleven o'clock at night, I received two notes, one from Cambaceres, the other from Prince de Talleyrand. The first wrote that he

flattered himself, if opportunity offered, I should do him justice and not forget the manner in which he had served me. The second informed me, that the senators whom I had seen were disposed to act for us, and he begged me to go and see two or three who were still afraid of the overthrown giant.

I did not go to bed that night; I would fain have been every where to enkindle in all hearts the ardour with which I was animated. I was nevertheless not without uneasiness, and I trembled, at times, lest the people should rise and sacrifice to the manes of the expiring empire the faithful band of my friends who were about to re-erect the monarchy.

At day-break, I went to Count Cornet's; he asked me trembling to what unexpected good fortune he owed my visit.

“ Why, sir,” said I to him, “ I am come to rejoice with you over the great event which is preparing. The throne of St. Louis is about to appear again with its ancient splendour.”

“ God grant it may! But I am greatly afraid that the devil will interfere.”

“ A great effort is expected of you, Monsieur le Comte. We flatter ourselves that you will be one of the first to proclaim Louis XVIII.”

“ Yes, madam, without doubt, provided the allies bring him back to us.”

“ That is certain ; they will bring him back. The Count d'Artois is at Nancy, the Duke of Angoulême at Bordeaux, the Duke of Berry will land immediately. The king will come for the fourth, if he can be assured of your support.”

“ He does me great honour, madam ; but, if the emperor cuts off the retreat of the allies, our situation will be strangely complicated, and then 'faith, we shall all run the risk of losing more than our fortune, and *négociant qui perd ne peut pas rire.*” I could not help laughing at Count Cornet, because, in quoting this ancient proverb, he had substituted the word *négociant* for *marchand*. It was the gentleman-cit who could not help betraying his old profession ; he promised me, however, to act like his colleagues and to range himself on the side of the majority.

I left him to call upon another senator, but the coward had fastened his door, and I could not obtain admittance. In my royalist enthusiasm, I began to drive about Paris in my open chaise, crying *Vive le Roi !* and distributing white cockades.

CHAPTER XI.

The first white flag.—Sentiment of Louis XVIII on the reception given to the allies.—My visit to Prince de Talleyrand.—The Abbé de Pradt.—Remarks of the king's respecting that personage.—Anecdote.—My conversation with that abbé.—Audience granted me by the Emperor of Russia.—Alexander I.—The Grand-Duke Constantine.—Provisional government.—The Duke of Bassano.—Conversation with M. de Vitrolles.—Last meanness of the senate.

THE memorable 31st of March arrived. There prevailed in France a weariness of despotism, or, if you please, of military glory—for I have no wish to shock any one. Such was the great cause which facilitated the revolution of 1814. The people began to ask, like the ass in La Fontaine.

Shall I be forced to bear a double load ?

The part of the people therefore was at first quite passive. The war now was only between the army and the allies; for, if it had been national, the capture of Paris would have been but an episode and not the catastrophe. Let us also ascribe some share to Providence, that every body may be satisfied: but, in examining what was done by the acting persons who lent a hand

to the work at this crisis, I am obliged to admit that a little treason contributed much to the downfall of the imperial throne. Those whom the ex-emperor had exalted so highly; those who, from gratitude as well as interest, ought to have supported him in this last struggle, deserted him with inconceivable baseness. A police possessing the least ability and energy would have secured the person of M. de Vauvineux, who, at nine in the morning of that important day, appeared in the *Place Louis Quinze*, read the proclamation of prince Schwarzenberg, and accompanied it moreover with the yet seditious cry of *Vive le Roi!*

Several gentlemen collected round him and echoed the cry of *Vive le Roi!* while the crowd about them durst neither imitate nor find fault with them. A profound fear of Napoleon still pervaded the Parisians. Not daring to unite their voices with those of our friends, they looked on and suffered them to act, in a kind of stupid astonishment. For my part—for I too was amid that royal groupe—I was alarmed at this sullen dejection. I was apprehensive that a secret dissatisfaction with the new order of things lurked beneath it. I felt that it was absolutely necessary to excite the people, and to make them decide violently for one or the other. Turning to Count Thibault de Montmorency, “For

heaven's sake," said I, "recollect that it is not by words, it is not by shouts, that we can rouse the enthusiasm of the people. A sign which speaks to the eye would be more effective than all this: if we had but a white flag!" M. de Montmorency comprehended me; he tied a white handkerchief to the end of his cane, and this handkerchief was the first royal banner that waved in Paris. It produced nearly the effect that I anticipated; the Parisians did not shout, but they followed, as if mechanically, the body of our friends, who proceeded to the boulevards. I should like to relate all that passed on that ever-memorable day; I should like to describe our joy and our extravagances; but, in fact, I have not the courage. I refer the reader to the newspapers of the time.

We gave a fanatically friendly reception to the allies: at sight of them we forgot our French dignity; we loved them with almost as much love as we felt for the royal family which they restored to us: for some days we were people of every country but our own. Louis XVIII, who possessed so sound a judgment, has frequently spoken to me with great contempt of the ridiculous conduct which we pursued on this occasion. He alleged that it might have been prejudicial to his cause, as the nation had not yet frankly declared itself. "You ought to have

maintained towards the allies an imposing reserve, without vain demonstrations, without that inconsiderate joy. So prudent a conduct would have inspired them with respect for the nation; whereas they have gone away with the idea that it was still, as fifty years before, the most fickle and frivolous in Europe. You ladies, too, behaved in a most extraordinary manner. The allies appeared to you so amiable collectively, that you had the air of being fond of them all individually, and they have circulated stories respecting you, which are not very honourable to the ladies of France."—"Good God! Sire," I replied, "we only meant to express the gratitude we felt for the benefit they conferred in bringing your Majesty back to us; we gave them cheerfully what we were almost always obliged to yield by force to the hod-men of the republic and the sabre-men of the empire. Not one of us regrets what she did for our good friends, the allies." I have since altered my language a little.

It is a fact that, on the 31st of March, and the following days, we were mad: it was nevertheless singular enough to see an immense city, in which the most profound order prevailed amidst universal agitation. It is impossible to bestow too much praise on the admirable conduct of the national guard in such delicate circumstances

The ridicule which is so fond of attaching itself to citizen-soldiers, had no hold upon them: but these particulars, which belong already to history, are not within the scope of my Memoirs.

The Emperor of Russia, as it had been agreed upon, took up his quarters at Prince de Talleyrand's. Our first diplomatist gave this hospitality from policy. He knew how easy it would be to dispose the Agamemnon of the future Holy Alliance in his favour, when he should have him every hour and every moment, as it were, under his hand. By giving a lodging to the Emperor of Russia in his house, he made him his prisoner —he confiscated him, body and soul, for his own profit.

I hastened as soon as possible to Prince de Talleyrand's. "Victory, Monseigneur!" cried I, the moment I saw him, leaping up at his neck, "victory! The people are for us: we have now but to gain the foreign sovereigns."

"Be easy, they will be for us; I am labouring to gain them; but," added he, "I must present you to his imperial majesty. You have behaved so well, that you deserve such a reward: wait here a moment in the company of Monseigneur; I shall soon be back with you."

What Monseigneur was it with whom the prince was going to leave me? It was the Archbishop of Malines, formerly ambassador in Po-

land, *the almoner of the god Mars*, in short, M. de Pradt. Though an Auvergnat, he was lively as a Provençal and lied like a Gascon: he has as much talent as originality, but not more originality than extravagance. He makes politics as he coins bon-mots, and he predicts quite as well as any prophet of the Old Testament. M. de Pradt has the mania of *self*; he entertains the highest idea of his own capacity, and aspires to nothing less than the highest posts, but he is always below them. It is well known that he turned against Napoleon, because he had taken the liberty to scoff a little at his talents. M. de Pradt pretends that it was he alone who achieved the restoration, and he counts us for nothing, us, who were royalists when he was but thinking about being so; he counts for nothing the discontent of the people, weary of Bonaparte; he counts for nothing the six hundred thousand men, who brought legitimacy back to us in triumph. M. de Pradt imagines that he was the Providence of the royal family, and, like Father Tournemine, *he believes all that he imagines*. If of late years he has abandoned the Bourbons whom he formerly *protected*, it is because they have not left him the high-chancellorship of the legion of honour, of which, at the moment of the restoration, M. de Pradt possessed himself by way of joke. In point of fact, the greatest service rendered to le-

gitimaey by M. de Pradt was his epithet of *Jupiter Scapin* applied to Napoleon.

Louis XVIII, who thoroughly knew M. de Pradt, spoke of him very contemptuously. When I had the honour to read with him the pamphlets of the noble abbé's, and that happened very frequently, thanks to the inexhaustible fecundity of the latter, the king pointed out to me all the extravagances in those publications. One day we were at a window of the Tuilleries ; the king was sitting near me : we were looking at the pedestrians passing by ; the abbé de Pradt was one of the first ; he walked or rather ran. His Majesty, seeing him, began singing :

Où allez-vous, monsieur l'abbé ?

Vous allez vous casser le nez.

At that very moment, I know not how it was, the abbé slipped and was very nearly down ; while we could not help laughing to see how instantaneously a prediction applied to the greatest *predicter* in the world was well nigh accomplished. This happened in 1815 ; I return to 1814.

I was then with Monseigneur de Malines at M. de Talleyrand's. I had often met this archbishop in company, but had never been tempted to seek his particular acquaintance. I disliked him, I scarcely know why ; perhaps because he

was a great talker, and there was no possibility, with a man so long-winded as he was, to edge in the least word in a conversation. On that day he came to me. "Well, Madam," said he, "I hope that I have made a capital job of it. Now France is saved: I have communicated my ideas to the allied sovereigns, and given my advice to the Prince of Benevent; and this morning at my recommendation the white flag was hoisted."

"As for your advice and recommendation," I replied, "I know nothing about them; but I cannot, in conscience, leave you the honour which you claim. It was I—I alone, if you please—who told Count Thibault de Montmorency to hoist the true French oriflamme. Besides, I was there, and you were not."

"*Parbleu*, I was every where. Who was the first to shout, *Vive le Roi*? And who distributed the white cockades?" With these words M. de Pradt put his hands into his pocket, for the purpose of producing the evidences necessary to convince me, and drew forth a tricoloured cockade. At the moment when he was going to hand it to me, he perceived his mistake, and hastily returned his proofs to his pocket, but not before I had had time to see them. "That is a little oversight of your Eminence's," said I; "provided that this morning you have not mistaken the pocket." M. de Pradt made believe not to

hear me, and continued to boast of his royalism.

Meanwhile M. de Talleyrand returned to fetch me, for the purpose of presenting me to his Majesty Alexander I. I left M. de Pradt waiting for his audience, and passed through a crowd of Russian officers, who appeared to me quite astonished to find themselves as conquerors at Paris : they might have said, as one of the doges of Genoa did at Versailles, that what surprised him most in that place was to see himself there. Be this as it may, they immediately made way for me, with a gallantry half French and half Moscovite, which was not the less interesting. Among them were members of the diplomatic body, who, in spite of their official gravity, could not dissemble the joy which they felt at their un-hoped for success.

The Prince de Talleyrand was waiting for me in a saloon : he had with him the Duke of Dalberg and Count Beurnonville. These constituted the provisional government, preparing for its installation. "Imitate Madame de Semallé," said he to me : "a great blow must be struck. The emperor is gallant, and what he refuses to diplomacy, he will perhaps grant to the ladies." With these words he conducted me to the Emperor Alexander. As soon as I saw the Emperor of Russia, I threw myself at his feet. He raised me

most gracefully, saying : " Ah ! what are you doing ? Never did noble lady kneel to a true knight."—" Sire," I said, " I am come to solicit of your Majesty that felicity which you alone can confer ; it will be a double joy to us to possess Louis XVIII if he is restored to us by Alexander I."

" Is it true that the French are strongly attached to the family of the Bourbons ?"

" Yes, Sire, in that family is all our hope, and it possesses all our love."

" That is charming," replied Alexander ; " and have all the French ladies the same enthusiasm ?"

" Yes, Sire."

" If that is the case, it will be France that will recall Louis XVIII, and not we who shall bring him back. Let the great bodies of the state decide, and the business will be settled."

I said a few words in reply, assuring the emperor that in two days the legislative bodies and the authorities of the city of Paris would have set the example. At that moment word was brought that a French general wished to speak with his majesty. I retired, enchanted with Alexander, and hoping wonders for our future condition.

Alexander was what is called a handsome man, well-shaped, with an agreeable face, and manners

exceedingly graceful and dignified at the same time. In his gallantry there was something reserved, which pleases in a powerful man: he could appreciate virtue, and was eager to reward merit. In his eyes was to be discovered a sort of vague exaltation, a species of religious reverie, which resembled the mysticism of the *illuminés*. He was not a man of great talent. I know not why some writers have wished to make a hero of Alexander I, as was his namesake of Macedon; his greatest glory, after all, is, that he sincerely loved what was right and strove to do it. But posterity will not forget that his father was murdered, and that the assassins of Paul I lived quietly at the court of Alexander. What then, was the end of the latter?—we know not; the tomb alone could tell us. I am of opinion, however, that this suspicion of nations was in reality but an injurious allusion to the past.

On leaving the emperor's cabinet, I met the Czarowitz Constantine. How curious it was to see a man bearing a Greek name with a Tartar face! It was still more curious to find in a man with such a name a profound hatred of the arts and literature. Had he lived a hundred years earlier, I have no doubt that he would have acted the same part as Alexis, the son of Peter the Great. He appeared to me violent, passionate, haughty, and fond, above all, of

power and despotism. I was mistaken: he has since proved that in that Tartar soul there is magnanimity enough to prefer the possession of a woman whom he adored to all the vain intoxications of power. I, who am a woman, cannot be severe towards a man who has made so great a sacrifice to one of our sex. I can hereafter record only the good qualities of Constantine: he was frank, brave, sincere, a religious observer of his oath: his soul was superior to his mind and his face; it was excellent.

The first thing I did was to circulate throughout Paris the hopes which Alexander had given me. In the evening I assembled at my house a great number of senators and of the most beautiful women of our party; I meant to require an oath of those gentlemen. How silly I was! did I not know that most of them had already taken a dozen oaths?

Next day, the 1st of April, our revolution took place. The senate, convened by the order of Prince de Talleyrand, appointed a provisional government. The members of this government, as we have foreseen, were in the first place the Prince de Talleyrand, president, and then the Duke of Dalberg, the Marquis de Jaucourt, Count de Beurnonville, and the Abbé de Montesquiou. M. de Vitrolles, who, in promoting

the interests of the Bourbons, was not unmindful of his own, became secretary of state, instead of the Duke of Bassano. Having mentioned the latter personage, I shall say a word concerning him. M. Maret was very like the statesman described by Figaro : conceiving himself to be profound when he was only hollow, and keeping himself busily employed in his cabinet in mending pens. He acted the gallant towards the ladies ; but all his manners were tinctured with the awkward politeness of a low-bred man, and had the clumsy grace of the apothecary : for, if Maret has not himself figured among the *Fleurants* of Dijon, his brother at least had followed that honest profession, and the whole family smelt of the shop. But to return to Vitrolles.

The latter was bent on performing a political part. Under the empire, he had turned driver of a diligence, as if to qualify himself for a cabinet courier ; and now he made himself a statesman to authorise his pretensions to something. He called upon me ; he wished to know if I had still any connexion with the Duke of Rovigo. I told him the truth, which was, that I had not seen that individual since the day on which he had accompanied the empress. I enquired why he asked me that question ; and he turned the conversation to evade answering me. He

then questioned me respecting my acquaintance with the king. This appeared extraordinary, but as I had no reason for concealing my journey to Hartwell, I related all the particulars of it. When I had finished, "Ah, madame la Comtesse," exclaimed M. de Vitrolles, pressing my hand tenderly between both his, "I have no doubt that you will see his majesty again on his return. Have the goodness to assure him of my warmest attachment, to represent to him with what zeal I have hitherto served him, and what a felicity it will be to me to continue to serve him. Tell him that I have studied France, that I know its wants, and that none perhaps is more capable than I am to direct any department of the administration which his majesty may be pleased to confide to me."

"Well," I replied, "I see what you would be at; you wish to kick down those who have raised you."

"I have no wish but to serve the king, and I assure you that he shall have no reason to complain, if you will do me the favour to speak to him in my behalf."

"With all my heart; but you will not take it amiss if I first think of my own little matters and attend to yours afterwards."

"By all means; you are indeed an adorable woman." M. de Vitrolles retired quite enchanted.

The senate had meanwhile decided that Napoleon had forfeited the throne, and that Louis XVIII should be invited to fill it. Count Dessoles had caused the national guard to assume the white cockade, and we learned that the allies were negotiating with the Duke of Ragusa.

The defection of the latter could not fail to produce the downfall of the imperial government. But, amidst all this good news, I was almost humbled by the conduct of the senate. It had found means to insert in the constitution an article framed exclusively to serve its private interest. This article, decreeing the change of the senators' salaries into perpetual annuities, had been introduced on the malicious recommendation of Prince de Talleyrand, who clearly foresaw that his colleagues would ruin themselves for ever if they had the folly to listen to him. In fact, this last sordid proceeding of the senate excited the indignation of every body, high and low, and consummated its political suicide. For the rest, it had behaved with such meanness during the whole course of its existence, that it could not finish otherwise than by an act of meanness.

CHAPTER XIII.

Plan for assassinating Napoleon.—Indignation of the king and Monsieur at this design.—Entry of Monsieur.—My letter to Louis XVIII.—The king's answer.—Prince de Talleyrand.—Monsieur.—The abbé de Latil.—M. de Bonald.—Opinion of the king respecting this writer.—Marshal Suchet.—Maria Louisa.—Death of Josephine.

We had then nothing more to fear from the senate; it was again to be sold, as it had sold itself to Napoleon: but it was the latter whom we had to fear. None of us could suppose but that he who had fought so hard to increase his power would fight to retain it. We expected to see him call forth in his despair all the resources of his genius—we were mistaken. Whether the defection of the marshals had disheartened the emperor, or, weary himself of so much glory, he wished to repose awhile in retirement, he renounced those combats which with him were almost always victories. He abdicated. His fall, which ought to have shaken the world, astonished only the inhabitants of Fontainebleau who witnessed it.

The members of the provisional government were meanwhile beset on all sides by the par-

tisans of the dethroned emperor, who were desirous of attaching themselves to the Bourbons. All advanced lofty pretensions ; the military, in particular, were extremely importunate. Fair promises were held out to get rid of them, but they were not fulfilled, and the discontent excited in consequence had well nigh proved fatal to royalty.

Napoleon was gone, but he was still alive, and of course to be dreaded. The idea of getting rid of him was started, and it was talked of in my saloon. M. de V.... asserted, and he was not the only one who did so, that neither France nor Europe could be quiet till they were delivered from Napoleon. This speech made me shudder. Nevertheless M. de Sal...., a young enthusiast, who was at my house, offered, in a paroxysm of zeal, to carry this atrocious scheme into execution. His offer was not accepted. There was too much honesty in his proposal ; he meant only to kill Napoleon ; but there was a plan for robbing him, as well as the Queen of Westphalia, who was vehemently suspected of carrying off part of the crown jewels among her baggage.

I paid no attention to these horrid schemes, and since, when certain quarrels took place between M. de Maubreuil and the Prince de Talleyrand, I was glad not to see *him* mixed up

in them who in undertaking the first mission had fulfilled only the second. I dare not say more. So much is certain, that the king expressed equal indignation and disgust on hearing of this criminal enterprize, and long afterwards he could not think of it without anger. "Those fellows," said he to me, "would have had all the profit to themselves and the whole culpability of this infamous act would have fallen upon my brother and me. We do not murder in our family ; we are murdered." He had no idea, when he used these words, that but a few years would elapse before a murder, committed on the person of his illustrious nephew, would but too well justify this apparent prediction of the future, which was then but a recollection of the past. As for Monsieur, Count d'Artois, such a crime was not less repugnant to his honourable spirit. One day he energetically expressed in my presence his displeasure at it. "We have returned to France," said he, "to accustom the nation to view in its sovereign a real father, and not the executioner of all that is great and unfortunate." And when the report was circulated in the palace that the attempt upon Napoleon had been ordered by a distinguished personage, the latter lost from that moment all his former influence. Monsieur, who, overlooking his preceding conduct, had at first en-

dured him, began to treat him with a coldness which daily increased. That amiable prince once said to us, when speaking of the personage in question : " When, out of politeness, I ask after his wife, I take good care not to let him suppose that it is about himself that I am asking."

The Count d'Artois, who had for some time accompanied the allied armies, arrived before his august brother, and made his triumphal entry into Paris on the 12th of April. It is well known what transports his affability, kindness, and chivalrous bearing, excited among the people ; and it is well known how, to use the expression of a great poet,

On vit voler partout les cœurs sur son passage.

The king appointed him his lieutenant-general : as soon as he was invested with this power, the Count d'Artois concluded a treaty with the allies from which he expected the happiest consequences ; but he was deceived, either through his own generous impatience, or the incapacity of those about him. The unconditional surrender of so many fortresses as we possessed abroad displeased France, which could not renounce, without regret, conquests that had cost her so dear. With this error commenced the reproaches

with which the restoration was loaded ; people forgot the good that it had done, and kept an account of its imprudences only.

As soon as the communications with foreign countries were restored by the counter-revolution, I hastened to write to Louis XVIII, to congratulate him on his speedy return. My letter, dictated by the sentiments which filled my heart, was sent to his majesty by Prince de Talleyrand, together with the deliberation of the senate concerning the deposition of Bonaparte. I think it right to give a copy of it here, that the answer may be the more intelligible to the reader.

“ Sire,

“ Joy makes people mad, and I am greatly afraid that I shall lose my wits when I see your majesty resume your crown. Yes, Sire, the tyrant who oppressed us has at length lost his illegitimate sceptre, and the descendant of St. Louis will soon cause the ancient throne of his ancestors to shine with new lustre. I shall see you again then, but this time in Paris, in your Tuileries, in your Louvre, at your home ; you will return to pardon the ungrateful, to reward the faithful—but no ! the moment you return, the latter will have their reward, since they will have your majesty.

“ As for myself, I cannot express the enthusiasm which I brought with me from Hartwell ; it has never since left me : I can think of nothing but the august inmate of that mansion, who gave me so amiable, so kind a reception. How happy should I have been to pay with my life for such bounty ; and yet, I must confess, I should have been afraid of death, which would have separated me for ever from your majesty.

“ For the rest, every body here is filled with the same sentiments, or nearly the same, for your Majesty ; men and women, all admire and love your Majesty. At the head of your devoted servants I must name M. de Talleyrand : his ancient faults have done harm to himself alone, his present conduct makes amends for them, since it is serviceable to the monarchy. Nor must I omit Messrs. de Montmorency, de Vauvineux, Sosthene de la Rochefoucauld, Royer-Collard, de Choiseul, Becquey, and a hundred others, whom I shall not name here, because it would be too long to mention all those who love you. But how can I help naming M. le Vicomte de Chateaubriand, who has so ably supported your cause with the pen ?—and his pen is equivalent to a sword.

“ When shall you arrive, Sire ? when shall we be happy ? We are all so impatient to see your Majesty, that the hopes which we cherish on

this point are no longer sufficient. While I am writing to you, I see upon my finger a ring, which a hand that I venerate gave me at Hartwell. This ring has assuredly its charm for me; but I wish it were a talisman; I would have recourse to its magic virtue to transport me to the giver.

“ I am,

“ your Majesty’s, &c., &c.”

This letter I wrote at the dictation of my enthusiasm for the king; that enthusiasm was exceedingly increased when I received the following reply:

“ Madam,

“ I lose no time in answering your charming letter, or, to express myself more correctly, your delicate recommendations; for you make mention in it of every body but yourself; yet, be assured that you have left behind at Hartwell as many remembrances as you have carried away with you.

“ Love for love, impatience for impatience, these are what I give to France, and I shall meet again at Paris one person, among others, for whom there is a great deal of them. I shall return to France with the experience of twenty-five years of adversity, for which I shall console

myself by giving to a people that I have always loved the best institutions, and by causing them to be respected ; for I know, and Corneille has observed, that

.... le ciel, entre les mains des rois,
Déposa sa justice et la force des lois.

“ I beg you to believe, madam, that I shall never forget what your friends have done for me. M. Talleyrand is undoubtedly an extraordinary man, and I destine for his noble attachment a reward with which I hope he will not be dissatisfied. I shall endeavour not to be ungrateful towards any of those whom you have mentioned, for ingratitude does not become any individual and still less a king.

“ As for yourself, what can I do to prove to you how dear your attachment is to me ? I hope that the king upon the throne will be able to prove his gratitude for the dangers which you have incurred for the king in exile. If a frank and affectionate friendship is of any value to you, I offer you mine ; be assured that it shall never fail you in any time.

“ *Addio, riverita signora, a rivederla.* I leave you to attend to the troubles of my new royalty ; but in so doing, I am preparing the means of being nearer to you.

“ Accept, madam, &c., &c.”

I thought this a charming letter; yet I should have liked to find in it a word relative to the Vicomte de Chateaubriand, I could not conceive how it happened that the king made no mention of him; and when I sought in my own head some reason for this silence, I was a thousand leagues from the truth. This reason I imagined that I had guessed, at a later period, and I could not help sighing over human frailty. I shewed the king's answer to the Prince of Benevent; he read it, smiling sarcastically at every line, and returned it to me, saying: "Ah! the pretty note which La Châtre has!" I supposed that M. de Talleyrand designed to intimate by this that Louis XVIII meant nothing by what he said respecting myself; but the egotist was thinking much more about his own affairs than mine: he foresaw that he should be promised wonderful things, but that he should never get what he was promised. Let us, however, not anticipate events.

As soon as the restoration was consummated by the departure of Napoleon, people who sought the favours of the new government thronged from all quarters to Paris: but it would be painful to me to dwell upon an epoch, when faithful royalists were seen tarnishing the most honourable conduct by private interest: I had rather pass to other subjects.

I have said that Monsieur, on entering Paris,

conquered all hearts. In his youth, Count d'Artois was admired for a vivacity, a grace, a spirit which rendered that prince an ornament of the court and a model for French gentlemen. He might justly be reproached with a little levity, a little dissipation in his conduct; but it was certain, that as soon as reflexion should have tempered the impetuosity of youth, this ardent prince, with whom some fault might be found, would make the best of kings. At a period to which it is painful to recur he would not make any concession to the new ideas—these new ideas were then hurrying his brother to the scaffold. But, in 1814, it was thought with reason that, enlightened by his misfortunes and by a residence in a constitutional country, he would cheerfully accede to the wishes of the nation, and to ideas which are perhaps not better than others, but which at least are those of the times.

Monsieur brought back with him a man who has certainly very estimable private qualities, but whom nothing calls to a prominent place on the political stage excepting his inordinate ambition. This man, who is a priest, would fain be something more: but out of the stuff of which a cardinal is made, it is not always possible to make a statesman, and it is not sufficient to wear Richelieu's hat to become a great minister. His eminence Monseigneur de Latil knows no-

thing of business, and has no idea of the present situation of France ; he persists in considering it such as it was in the sixteenth century, and not as time has made it ; and yet, notwithstanding his short-sightedness, he complains that he lacks power, while I, who know him believe, that were he unfortunately to attain power, he would not know what to do with it.

I was for a moment apprehensive that, with the aid of his patron, M. de Latil would obtain some high office of state ; but Louis XVIII, who possessed a wonderful tact for the appreciation of character, took good care not to grant any thing to the pretensions of the cardinal. In general, he somewhat distrusted people of the old court. " It seems to them," said he to me, " that they are still at *l'Œil de Bœuf*; they have not learnt any thing, neither have they forgotten any thing. Such men shall have no influence with me ; they will cry, they will bawl ; I shall let them bawl and cry, and shall pursue my course. If I were to be guided by their almanacks, I should not reign a year."

Since I am on the subject of ambitious persons, I ought not to forget the Vicomte de Bonald. As he is a philosopher without philosophy, so he is a gentleman without breeding ; his grandfather figured among the petty tradesmen of a petty town. The present Bonald was poor

when the revolution commenced: I know not how he has the courage to complain of it since he is indebted to it for a yearly income of one hundred and fifty thousand livres. This argues great disinterestedness, or great ingratitude, whichever you please. It is true that he has some reason to be dissatisfied with it; for it has led him to the rank of a peer by the road of the censorship, and I know honest men who would not arrive at such glory by such a way. M. de Bonald accommodated himself extremely well to the imperial *régime*. Subsequently, at the time of the restoration, he expected to be created minister. Disappointed in this expectation, he set about raising an opposition; and yet a handsome pension of twenty thousand francs had been granted to him out of the funds of the police. This certainly smacks of ingratitude. Louis XVIII. could not endure either his person or his works: he called him the Drummer Bonald; from the hollowness of his reasoning. One day when the Duke de La Châtre was complaining to the late king of violent tooth-ache, adding that he had in vain tried all possible soporifics in order to get some sleep, "La Châtre," replied Louis XVIII, "read the *Législation primitive*." It may not be amiss to inform the reader that this is the title of one of M. de Bonald's works.

About the same time that Monsieur entered

Paris, we received intelligence of the result of the battle of Toulouse, and the submission of Marshal Soult, which immediately followed that of Marshal Suchet. The latter had, so early as the month of March, been gained over to the cause of the Bourbons by Ferdinand VII king of Spain, who, as he passed through Perpignan, had several conferences with the marshal. It was rumoured that the Spanish monarch had promised to permit him to retain the duchy of Albufera, with all its revenues, upon condition that he should not afford any succour to the Duke of Dalmatia, then closely pursued by Wellington's army. So much is certain, that the inactivity of Marshal Suchet prevented Soult from gaining a last and signal victory; for the latter, with a few additional troops, with which the Duke of Albufera might have furnished him, could have beaten and destroyed the allied army. All military men and all the inhabitants of Toulouse concur upon this point.

Amidst this general defection, was there not some one at least who adhered to the cause of the emperor? No. Maria Louisa herself abandoned her husband, and the latter paid in exile for the imprudent alliance which his ambition had contracted. If Napoleon had married a French woman, a Montmorency, a La Tremouille, as he once had thoughts of doing, the French

blood would have boiled for him in that empress's heart, in the moment of danger, when Maria Louisa basely proved herself Austrian. But why pause at a supposition? Had not Bonaparte given his hand to that noble Josephine, who was thoroughly French, both by her noble qualities and by her amiable defects? Poor Josephine! she did not long survive the fall of the man whose fortune she had founded. An acute disease terminated her life with the reign of her ungrateful husband.

Her death, which happened so seasonably, gave rise to strange suspicions. Certain things were whispered concerning an individual about whom she had it in her power to make dangerous disclosures; and the people, always fond of the extraordinary, attributed to this cause the premature end of the first wife of Bonaparte.

CHAPTER XIII.

The war for places.—Arrival of Louis XVIII.—My first audience.—The king's snuff-box.—His opinion of M. de Chateaubriand.—M. de M——The Duke de Rivière.—Second conversation with the king relative to some eminent personages.—Intrigues of the clergy.—The Abbé de Montesquiou.—M. Dambray.—General Dupont.—Baron Malouet.—M. d'André.—M. de Blacas.—Promulgation of the charter.—Count de Vaudreuil.—The Duke de Lauraguais.

AT the first moment of the restoration, as it may naturally be supposed, all individual ambitions were set in motion. These wished to grasp all, those would not give up any thing. The royalists began already to murmur against the Bourbons, because, since their arrival among them, they had not made a general sweep. They talked of ingratitude, though it was themselves who were the truly ungrateful, in requiring the interests of the monarchy to be sacrificed to them. The Bonapartists, as I call those who were in possession of the places, could not on their side conceive how the new comers, who had never served an apprenticeship, could have the extravagant pretension to supplant them. Both parties complained: there was a universal discontent. It was under these circumstances that Prince de Talleyrand said to me, when I paid

him a visit: "It is high time for the king to come; his presence alone can restore order: if he tarries too long, I cannot answer for any thing."

The king, who was apprised by faithful servants of all that occurred, hastened his return. When he was at St. Ouen, I went to meet him, solicitous to present my homage. He received me with those charming manners which enchant a subject, especially if of our sex. "What, are you there?" said he to me, holding out a hand, from which my lips had great difficulty to part. "Well! you have taken a deal of trouble on my account."

"Sire," I replied, "I have only ensured my happiness in doing my duty. Your presence is a sovereign cure for the sufferings of French hearts. The very sight of you has been sufficient to revive France."

"I love to repeat it," said Louis XVIII, "I am coming with the desire to do what is right. I shall be content if people do not doubt my good intentions. But it is requisite that those who love me a little should persuade those who love me too much to love me with more moderation. I dread nothing so much as the exaggeration of attachment. My greatest fear is that the kingdom will be split into two parties, the old *régime* and the new. All ought on the con-

trary to be blended, amalgamated. The only national system is a system of fusion."

I comprehended the king's meaning, and I had sufficient good sense to conform to it; we continued to converse together for some time. At the moment when I was going to take my leave, he begged me to come to see him, not in full court dress, but in plain attire. He then ordered his first valet de chambre to introduce me when I should call by private corridors; this favour excited abundance of envy, but procured me a great number of courtiers.

But, before I proceed any further, I ought to tell how important my part of confidante to the sovereign is gradually becoming: this will account before-hand for the freedom of some of our conversations. I am well aware that slander has put a bad construction on the familiarity of his majesty with his most humble subject; but his familiarity was a kingly familiarity: Louis XVIII, he who is accused of a cold egotism, loved effusions of the heart. He had long sought a friend among the men, and had never found any but favourites: in his friendship for persons of the other sex, there seemed to be something *piquant* in descending to an equality without compromising his rank, because, in these short abdications of the *tête-à-tête*, the royal dignity was replaced by French courtesy, which puts

with impunity a king at the feet of the ladies like any simple gentleman. For my part I never saw any thing but weariness of grandeur in the affectionate converse of Louis XVIII; my chat amused him, and relieved him in the splendid prison of the Tuileries from the *ennui* of diplomatic phrases. The expressions of my attachment were rather strong, but I thought I needed such to obtain forgiveness for my boldness in sometimes contradicting the opinion of the monarch. Silly court-gossip was buzzed in my ear without troubling me: those who envied me vainly amused the cockneys of Paris with a few jokes: they did not affect me. One evening, I went to a ball, when a petty irremoveable counsellor, quizzing me with a most impertinent look, said to his neighbour loud enough for me to hear him: "Pon my honour, the king's snuff-box is a very pretty one." There was a stifled laugh all around the little black gentleman. To no purpose did I ask my friends the meaning of this pretended joke: it is still a riddle to us. I dare say those who laughed knew no more about it than I did. But to return to the first intrigues of the restoration.

In vain did Messrs. de Talleyrand, de Chateaubriand, de Vitrolles, and de Montesquiou, strive to win the favour of the monarch; they were unsuccessful. Louis XVIII, who was acute

himself, disliked the cunning M. de Talleyrand. " If I put him at the head of affairs," said he, speaking of the ex-Bishop of Autun, " he will make Europe believe that I cannot do without him." Louis XVIII was not deficient in literary talents, and those of M. de Châteaubriand threw him indirectly into the shade. The most cruel blow inflicted on that great writer was by the hand of M. de Vitrolles. One day, he took it into his head to say to the king in a jocose manner: " M. de Châteaubriand would be extremely useful to the ministry for composing documents and papers in a brilliant manner."

" Yes," replied the king, " people would not fail to say that he corrects my speeches." Louis XVIII had against M. de Châteaubriand a certain antipathy, which is rarely cured—a literary antipathy. Richelieu was jealous of Corneille!

M. de Vitrolles, in preventing the success of M. de Châteaubriand, was not more fortunate himself. No sooner did Louis XVIII ask him a few questions relative to the situation of France than he perceived all the incapacity of that poor man and gave him up. M. de Vitrolles, perceiving that nothing was to be done with the king, attached himself to Monsieur, who, being less occupied with serious matters than his brother, was more easy of persuasion. His Provençal romancing caused him to find at this

second court somewhat of the favour which he could not obtain at the first.

Meanwhile the promulgation of the charter had spread consternation in the camp of the faithful. The Duke de M. called to see me.

“ Will you not assist us ?” said he.

“ To do what ?”

“ To prevent the promulgation of that pest, the charter. What need has the king to tie his hands ? Let him reign as his forefathers did. Are we not here to support him in case of emergency ?”

“ No doubt, and the allies too ; but they must go at last, and then.....”

“ What are you turned jacobin ?”

“ Yes, I am ; I proved it at Hartwell, and on the 31st of March in the Place Louis Quinze. But, upon my word, you are all singular folks. You make no scruple of giving the most odious names to those who have not such exaggerated notions as yourselves.”

The duke, finding that he made no impression upon me, retired highly displeased at what he termed my indifference.

M. de M.... was instigated by a man, very honest no doubt, but a mere cipher, the marquis, since Duke de Rivière, who might almost be said to consider royalism as a political baptism for the nobility. He imagined that blind al-

legiance supplied the place of talent, and that, provided a man was thoroughly devoted to his king, he was perfectly qualified for any office. In like manner he took his piety for information and relied with confidence on the Holy Ghost to confer on him all that he needed. In other respects M. de Rivière was frank, upright, sincere, full of excellent qualities and solid virtues. I hope therefore that I shall not give the reader a wrong opinion of him by the portrait which I have drawn: I merely meant to intimate that he was no statesman.

The first time that I saw the king again, agreeably to the permission which he had granted me, I found him dull, thoughtful, in an ill humour. I supposed that something or other had crossed him. He did not leave me long in ignorance of the cause of his vexation; and concluded by complaining of the resistance which his royal will met with at court and especially from the clergy. "This authority," said he to me, speaking of the clergy, "is no longer in harmony with the spirit of the age. I have announced my charter; I laid down its principles in my declaration at St. Ouen. I will proclaim it in spite of all those who prefer their interest to that of the monarchy." The king paused for a moment; I was silent too that I might not disturb his reflexions. He then resumed:

“ Do you know the Duke of Ragusa ?”

“ Yes, Sire.”

“ And I know him too. But what do you think of him ?”

“ He is an able diplomatist and a great captain. Now, that he is forced to be loyal, your Majesty may rely upon him.”

“ He is said to be profuse.”

“ Profuse, Sire, with magnificence. He has always spent his income before-hand. He is a true gentleman of the old school.”

“ And Marshal Oudinot ?”

“ He is honour personified ; but I think his arm superior to his head.”

“ You are right. As for the Duke of Albufera, he, I am told, has equal capacity for administration and for military science. What I have heard respecting his conduct in Catalonia has given me a high opinion of him. He contrived to do his duty there without neglecting the welfare of the soldier. As for Ney, he is a hero in the field of battle, *but no brains*. All his merit lies in his sword.”

The king, after thus expressing himself respecting these illustrious personages, reverted to his charter. He told me that the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria opposed his giving it with all their might, while Alexander, on the con-

trary, was incessantly exhorting him to that measure.

“ My sentiments agree with those of my brother of Russia,” added Louis XVIII: “ without a fundamental compact I should not reign six weeks; I am determined, with the help of God, to transmit my name to posterity as that of the founder of French liberty.”

Thereupon Louis XVIII, who thought of every thing, recollected that he had granted an audience to Prince Berthier. As I was retiring he said to me: “ I had figured to myself, while I was away, that all those lieutenants of Bonaparte were peasants, mere clowns: but I was wrong; that man had worked them up wonderfully. They are polished, nay even as artful as the people of the old court: we must mind how we behave.”

The intrigues for diverting Louis XVIII from the promulgation of the charter proved ineffectual. His perseverance produced some very disagreeable scenes at home. The king was told that people would never accede to this compact; and that they were leaving the country, to which he replied only by wishing a good journey to the discontented. Some members of the clergy ventured to present a memorial in the form of a protest against the equality of all religions. They

were for granting only a tacit toleration, and insisted on the restoration of all the privileges and the immense property possessed by their order before the revolution. It was the old Archbishop of Rheims who was deputed to lay the grievances of his colleagues at the foot of the throne.

“ Monsieur de Rheims,” said the king, in answer to the speech made by the Archbishop, “ I will take your request into consideration, but not before you have got it signed by the whole of your diocesans. Till then, I shall consider it as a childish affair to which I cannot pay serious attention.”

On the 13th of May the king appointed his ministry. He took for chancellor M. d’Ambray, formerly attorney-general to the Cour des Aides of Paris. He was a man of very moderate abilities, who during the revolution had forgotten law without learning politics. He proved, in consequence, very inferior to the important post conferred on him. M. d’Ambray had in his favour only obscure virtues, and unluckily something else is required in the post which he occupied.

Prince de Talleyrand was placed at the head of the foreign department. The ministry of the interior was given to the Abbé de Montesquiou, who entirely lost the good opinion which we had of him on his own shewing. He was quite confounded by the immense details of his administra-

tion; and being unable, notwithstanding the prodigious length of his legs, to keep up with business, he was obliged to bring it down to his pace. It must be confessed, that he was scarcely acquainted with the first elements of that which he had undertaken. But his ignorance must not bear the blame due to his indolence. I must state then that he slept three fourths of his time, and that he gave his signature with his eyes shut. No wonder that he should have signed so many silly things.

General Dupont was appointed to the ministry of war. He had no other title to this post than the capitulation of Baylen and the imprisonment which he had been fortunate enough to suffer. He was, like most of his colleagues, a man of no capacity whatever; he had no method, no order. His woful carelessness occasioned horrible malversations in his department, from which he, no doubt, was pure, but for which he was responsible. He could not be kept more than a few months, and that was too long.

Baron Malouet, appointed minister of the marine, held that post but a short time, death having surprised him in the midst of his labours. He had good intentions, intelligence, and science; but what was particularly admirable in him was his extraordinary industry. He did his duty conscientiously, a trouble from which the minis-

ters of modern France have in general dispensed themselves.

M. d'André had the direction of the police. This man was about as much cut out for that place as M. de Montesquiou was for his: you would have perplexed him most grievously if you had asked him about any thing connected with his department. He would have referred you to his chief clerks, who, in his absence, made themselves merry at the expense of their superior, whom they led by the nose. His evening parties were nevertheless extremely brilliant.

The nearer the moment for the promulgation of the charter approached, the more the ill-humour of certain persons increased. I saw excellent royalists, who carried their silly spite so far as to regret Napoleon: he, at any rate, would not have given a charter. These certain persons could not comprehend that this so much dreaded charter was the palladium which was to protect for ever their political existence. What served to cheer them a little was the ministry, consisting almost exclusively of honest men of the old *régime*, who belonged no more than themselves to the new institutions. At the head of this ministry, though he did not figure ostensibly, was the Count de Blacas. This gentleman, who had enjoyed the king's friendship at Hartwell, did not lose it at Paris. I found him here just what I had done there—that is to say, su-

perficial, conceited, and fond of antiquities. M. de Blacas adored the king, as a young man loves his mistress. He never lost sight of him for a moment ; and, had Louis XVIII taken his word for it, he would have served him instead of all the gentlemen of the bed-chamber and all the captains of the life-guards. Great, however, as was his influence, he could not effect any change in the resolute determination of the king.

On the 2nd of June Louis XVIII assembled the peers. Of these there were three very distinct classes : in the first place the ancient Dukes and Peers before the revolution ; then, such of the senators as were neither regicides nor declared enemies of the house of Bourbon ; and lastly, those gentlemen on whom the king was pleased to confer that title.

I had flattered myself that I should find M. Charles de Vauvineux in the list. I thought that his enthusiasm on the 31st of March deserved such a distinction. I explained myself on the subject to the Prince de Talleyrand. "But," said he, "if all those who shouted had been made peers, the chamber must have held its sittings in the Place du Carrousel."

"Yes," I replied, "and if nobody had shouted we should not now be in the state we are, and you, Monseigneur, for your part, would have been hung long ago."

The Prince de Talleyrand answered, as he

always answers when he does not choose to speak—with a laugh, and I set about doing as he does. In despair I applied to his majesty. No sooner had I uttered the name of M. de Vauvineux, than Louis XVIII, opening his large blue eyes with a look of astonishment, asked who was this M. de Vauvineux ? I was struck all of a heap by this question, and could not help secretly making some rather seditious reflexions on the unprofitableness of enthusiastic loyalty.

Among the new peers I shall mention the Count de Vaudreuil, who had been in such high favour during the reign of Louis XVI, being honoured by the queen's friendship. He was an impetuous and irascible Creole : grand falconer of France before the revolution, he now wished to fill the place of M. d'Angevilliers ; it is said that he set up for an amateur of paintings and a patron of the fine arts. As this led to nothing, he sold his collection, renounced the character of Mæcenas, and confined himself to that of courtier. He was called the handsome Vaudreuil, and yet I think I recollect my father saying that he was ugly, but I am not sure of that. For my part, when I knew him, he was old, reserved, and regretting the good old days of *l'Œil-de-Bœuf*.

As soon as he thought it possible, the Duke de Lauraguais undertook to cause him to be talked of again. He absolutely insisted on being a

duke and peer in virtue of his ancient title and not in virtue of the new one. He had not counted the years which had elapsed since 1789. It was melancholy to see a debilitated old man striving to detain inexorable Time, who, to use a well known expression, was pushing him along crying: keep moving, keep moving!

CHAPTER XIV.

Solicitors.— **Trowsers and Breeches.**— The advances of Literature repulsed.— M. Etienne. — M. de Jouy.— Articles in the Gazette de France.— Negociations with M. de Jouy.— Broken off through the mismanagement of M. de Vitrolles. — M. de Noailles.— The author gives a dinner to several literary men.— Messrs. Le Mercier, Tissot, Feletz, Merle, Martainville.— Desaugier.— Charles Nodier.— Anecdote of Fouché.

THE charter was given: all the leading personages had not received it with equal pleasure. I have mentioned the old Duke de Lauraguais; I shall name also Count, now Prince, Jules de Polignac, who murmured a little on account of it. The former functionaries had been confirmed or superseded by new ones. The government set itself in motion and the king strove to accustom it to the new order of things. What pains Louis XVIII took to appease

the discontent excited by so many hopes disappointed, so many claims overlooked ! Every day brought, by land and water, on foot and on horseback, applicants of all countries and of all classes : all of them solicited places ; all thought they had a right to obtain them—how were they all to be satisfied ?

The king, with his exquisite tact and his natural sagacity, perceived the continual blunders of those about him, and every day he was obliged to repair the mischief which the preceding day had done in his name. For example, some powerful personage or other about the palace took it into his head to forbid the admission of all persons in trowsers to the hall of the marshals and the chapel : nothing but small-clothes was to be tolerated. So far so good : but the same powerful personage also took it into his heard to exempt the English from this rigorous measure. Great murmurs were the consequence. The French complained and justly, that in their country foreigners were treated with more indulgence than themselves. These complaints reached my ears ; I lost no time in speaking to Louis XVIII, and he immediately ordered all persons, whether French or English, to be admitted dressed as they pleased in the nether-garment of the old *régime* or that of the revolution.

On this occasion Louis XVIII said to me : “ Princes are very unfortunate ; it is not enough for them to have understanding for themselves, they must have it for others also.

But of all the faults committed at this period the most stupid, and at the same time the most mischievous, was the disdain with which the advances of literary men were repelled. The restoration, which had forgotten in its exile the power of the philosophers of the last century, was not aware how important it was for it to enlist the writers of the present age heartily in its cause. It was not enough to gain them by good pensions ; they were deprived of those which they owed to the politic munificence of Napoleon. Thus M. Etienne, who desired nothing more than to obtain pardon for his participation in the Oriflamme, found himself almost spurned. He had not even the honour of a scolding conferred on him ; it was just as if he had not existed. He had the strongest desire in the world to continue the censorship for the good cause ; but he was obliged to do violence to his disposition, pacific and at first liberal, in spite of himself : he has so much good sense that he gradually took up the part of opposition, as if he had never in his life performed any other.

M. de Jouy, another imperial censor, was

not used better than M. Etienne. He was something more than a censor, he was a royalist of old date. He had been proscribed during the revolution, indeed I know not whether he had not been sentenced to death for non-appearance ; he had likewise fought in the ranks of the army of Condé. Be this as it may, on his return to France, under the empire, his talents had well nigh been buried in one of the government offices. He soon perceived, however, that there was a more brilliant part for him to play in literature : the place of Voltaire was vacant, he aspired to fill it, and he certainly has wit enough to pass himself off in a drawing-room for a man of genius. It is asserted that he knows nothing of Latin, and yet, by an effort of which he alone is capable, he has found out Latin words omitted in all the dictionaries of that language. Some years since, he made the fortune of the *Gazette de France*, by furnishing it every week with an article on manners, under the signature of *L'Ermite de la Chaussée d'Antin*. These articles displayed great talent, that talent of acuteness and observation which pleases our sex, and I professed the highest admiration for M. de Jouy. I wished him to be gained by some means or other for the new monarchy ; the business was mismanaged : I shall show how, and hope that neither he nor M. de Vitrolles will contradict me.

At the time of the king's return, M. de Jouy continued every Saturday to act *l'Ermité* in the *Gazette de France*. He was aware of the pretensions, the claims, the petitions with which the king was overwhelmed from all quarters.

They were so numerous that, had they all been complied with, the State would have been ruined in twenty-four hours. This suggested to M. de Jouy the subject of a charming letter: the reader will no doubt be pleased to find it here; it is not long, and besides, it is almost a novelty compared with all that the old Hermit is now giving us as new.

“ Sir,

“ Neither you nor I have time to throw away. I will therefore explain to you, in very few words, the object of my letter.

“ I had formerly the honour of holding a situation under one of the princes of the house of Bourbon, and perhaps I have been fortunate enough to furnish some proofs of attachment to that august family, at a time when there was, if not merit, at least danger in manifesting my zeal. But I strive not to forget that the Mornays, the Sullys, the Crillons, modestly called this *performing a duty*.

“ I know not on what foundation I am sup-

posed, in my province, to possess an influence which I do not enjoy, and to which I am indebted for numberless solicitations poured in upon me, without having it in my power to be serviceable to those who address them to me.

“ I cannot bethink me of any way but one of escaping this new kind of persecution, which is to publish the letter of one of my kinswomen, and the answer which I could not help sending her. The first is, in some sort, a summary of three or four hundred letters which I have received on the same subject. I feel the less delicacy in making it public as I take leave to keep the name of the writer to myself ; and, after all, this letter is not less creditable to the heart of her who wrote it than to the understanding by which it was dictated.”

“ Br. de L....”

“ How I rejoice, my dear friend, at the events which have brought back our illustrious princes to the throne ! What felicity ! you have no idea of the importance which these events and your residence in Paris give me here. The prefect is afraid of me, and his wife, who would not so much as look at me before, has invited me twice to dinner.

“ But we must not lose time and we reckon

upon you. Would you believe that my husband has not yet taken the least step to recover his place, upon pretext that it no longer exists and that he was reimbursed for the loss of it in assignats ? He is the most phlegmatic man in France.

My brother-in-law has assumed the cross of St. Louis : he wanted but nine years of having it when the revolution broke out : it would not be right to refuse to reckon among his services the twenty years of troubles and misfortunes which he passed at his estate. He relies upon you to get his *brevet* dispatched without delay.

“ I subjoin to my letter a memorial from my eldest son, the marquis. He had a right to his uncle’s reversion. It will be easy for you to obtain it for him. I should wish his brother, the chevalier, to have a commission in the navy, but with a rank worthy of his name and the ancient services of his family. As for my grandson, Auguste de G. . . . , he is of the right age to be admitted among the pages, and a word from you will be sufficient for that.

“ We shall set out for Paris in the beginning of next month ; I shall take my daughter with me ; I have a great desire to place her at court : it is a favour that will not be refused to your solicitations, if you follow them up with a little energy and perseverance.

“ Think of poor F. . . . ; he figured, to be sure, in the time of the revolution ; but, for a month

past, he has been quite another man. You know that he has nothing, and that he is ready to sacrifice all for our rulers. His zeal disposes him to serve them in the office of prefect, and he is well qualified for it. You recollect the pretty song which he wrote for me.

“ M. de B...., son of the former intendant of the province, will call to see you : contrive to be serviceable to him, he is a friend of the family. If the intendancies are not re-established, he would be content with the place of receiver-general. It is the very least that can be done for a man devoted to his prince, and who was imprisoned six months during the terror.

“ I must not forget to recommend M.... to you : he is reproached with having served all parties, because he has been employed by all the governments that have succeeded each other in France for these twenty years ; but believe me, he is an excellent fellow ; he was the first to mount the white cockade. Besides, he only desires to be retained in his place of director of the posts. Take care and write to me under cover to him.

“ Herewith I send you the papers of my father-in-law. There was owing him by the states of Languedoc the sum of forty-five thousand francs, which he was never paid. I hope this sum will be handed over to you without

delay, and that you will make use of it, if you should have occasion, which, however, is scarcely probable, situated as you must be.

“Adieu, my dear cousin: I embrace you on behalf of the whole family, till I have the pleasure of soon coming to see you in Paris.

“J. DE V.”

A N S W E R.

“Paris, June 15, 1814.

“You cannot believe, my dear cousin, with what interest I read the letter which you have done me the honour to write me, and with what zeal I have enforced the claims, so just and so legitimate, of all the persons whom you have recommended to me. But, you will not be more astonished than I have been myself, at the obstacles that I have to encounter, and you would deem them insurmountable if you know as much as I do of the people with whom we have to deal.

“When I talked of your son, who has always had an intention of going into the army, and asked for a commission of *chef-d'escadron* in the regiment which his father formerly commanded, did they not allege, as an objection of a certain weight, that peace was made, and that before they could think of giving a commission to the

Marquis de V.... they must provide for twenty-five thousand officers, some of whom—would you believe it?—value themselves upon their campaigns, their wounds, and even go so far as to set up a claim on account of the battles which they have been in; whilst others, more closely connected with the misfortunes of the royal family, are returning to France without any other fortune than the favour and the promises of the king? I asked, with a little anger, what would be done for your son and for a multitude of excellent royalists who have so long mourned over the misfortunes of the state, and whose prayers have never ceased to recall in secret the family of the Bourbons to the throne of their ancestors; and I was told that these would rejoice to see the end of our calamities and the accomplishment of their prayers.

“Your husband must indeed be a most singular man, and I can conceive, my dear cousin, how much you must have to suffer from his incredible apathy. At sixty-five or six, at most, reduced to an income of forty thousand francs, he confines himself to a solitary country-seat, and fancies that he may renounce the career of ambition; as if a father did not live for his children, as if a gentleman ought not to die upon his legs!

“I am vexed that your brother-in-law has assumed the cross of St. Louis before it was con-

ferred on him ; for it may happen that the king will not so easily relinquish the right of granting that decoration himself, and that he will not approve the justice which certain persons are so eager to do themselves. You must be aware that it is less unpleasant not to have the cross of St. Louis, than to find one's self obliged to give it up.

" I have not neglected to urge the claims of your son, the chevalier, and I do not despair of procuring his admission at the examination of the guards of the royal navy ; we will then do our best to get him promoted over the heads of a hundred officers, much too proud of their valour, of their ancient renown, and of the loyalty which they pretend to have demonstrated at Quiberon.

" Your grandson, Auguste, is entered on the list for the pages : I cannot tell you precisely, my dear cousin, when he will be admitted into the hotel, since your application comes after the claims of 3,775 others, allowed on behalf of gentlemen or officers who have fallen in battle, without the least distinction between the services rendered to the state and to the prince.

" It was an excellent idea of yours to place your daughter at court, and the thing will not be difficult, when you have found her a husband whom her rank and fortune can summon thither ;

till then I cannot see exactly what she would do there, or what suitable part she could perform, especially as she is fully of age. The maids of honour are not re-established.

“ I have presented a petition in behalf of F...., in which I introduced the pretty song which he wrote for you; but people are getting so unreasonable that such claims are no longer sufficient for obtaining the post of prefect. I must even tell you that they give your *protégé* no great credit for his conversion and the sacrifices which he is ready to make; his enemies persist in alleging that he is not to be relied on. I, who witnessed his proceedings at the time, am certain, that if he would now serve the good cause with only half the zeal that he formerly contributed to the triumph of the bad one, he might be employed to very useful purpose; but will they have sense enough to put this to the proof?

“ I cannot learn whether the intendancies will be re-established, but it seems to be the opinion that the receiver-generalships will be diminished, were it only by the number of those which existed in the departments separated from our territory. This makes me fear, that M. de B.... will be obliged to make shift with the enormous fortune formerly amassed by his father as *farmer-general*, and which he found means to place in security

from the storms of the revolution: he must have a little philosophy.

“ Be perfectly easy respecting the situation of M....; I know him; he is pliable in temper and principles. For these twenty years past, he has crept in among all parties without being crushed by any of them; he is a man of wonderful address, and whom nobody will ever serve so ably as he will serve himself. He is no longer director of the post, and has just obtained a more lucrative place in another department. Shall you continue to interest yourself so much for him?

“ I return you, my dear cousin, your father-in-law’s papers relative to the debt due by the states of Languedoc; just as your claim is, it appears to me not likely to be discharged in a hurry. It has been decided that the arrears of pay due to the troops, the public debt, the military pensions, and a multitude of other matters of that kind, shall be taken into consideration; this measure is evidently the result of some intrigue. You might desire F.... to write a pamphlet on the most urgent wants of the state, and bid him place this debt in the first line. You have no idea to what a degree the government is influenced by the swarms of petty pamphlets, which dishonesty, stupidity, and hunger, are daily producing with such laudable emulation.

“ By the course which things are taking, you see, my dear cousin, that it is necessary to arm yourself with patience. I shall even assure you that the journey which you purpose taking to Paris will not advance your business. According to a calculation made from the registers of the police, there are in the capital, at the moment I am writing, 123,000 provincials of all ranks, of both sexes, of all ages, who have come hither with claims, provided with titles almost as indisputable as yours, and who will have the inappreciable advantage over you of priority of application. For the rest, as I know that you possess philosophy and a love of literature, I beg you to read a paper in the Spectator, on the just pretensions of those who solicit places; it is No. 32 in the seventh volume. The same kind of events bring forward the same kind of characters.”

I took in the *Gazette de France*; I read this clever epistle with real pleasure. I shewed it to the king, who was delighted with it, and the more so because certain liberal courtiers had the gallantry to attribute it to him. “ There,” said Louis XVIII, to me, “ that is the way to write. M. de Jouy is a delightful man: I should like to secure him.”—“ That cannot be difficult,” I re-

plied; "he is an author, consequently vain, and by flattering his vanity, you would bring him to you." I ought to have offered myself as a negotiator. I met M. de Jouy at the house of the clever and excellent Madame de Pontecoulant; I have no doubt that we should soon have come to an understanding. I was wrong not to interfere in this affair. M. de Vitrolles, who meddled with every thing, caused himself to be commissioned to speak to the Hermit; he requested that he would call upon him; M. de Jouy complied. M. de Vitrolles told him, in the king's name, how delighted his majesty was with his style and his articles in the gazette: he extolled the latter to the skies, adding that his majesty wished M. de Jouy to proceed in the same tone. Thus far, M. de Vitrolles spoke very sensibly: but here he took it into his head to ask the Hermit, if any thing could be done to serve him? The latter replied that he coveted nothing but the cross of St. Louis, which he had justly merited. Upon this, M. de Vitrolles foolishly imagined that his visiter was ready to sell himself. He begged him, if he wished to obtain what he desired, not merely to hold up to ridicule the exaggerated pretensions of the partisans of the monarchy, but to assail, with all the force of his talents, the fallen great of the em-

pine. M. de Jouy, who, though he has since done some foolish things, has nevertheless a heart, plumply refused.

M. de Vitrolles was extremely displeased at this refusal; he retained a spite against M. de Jouy, and from that moment ceased all the coaxing by which he had hoped to win the good Hermit. The latter, on his part, indignant that the cross of St. Louis, which was lavishly bestowed on every comer, had been refused to his talents and his services, drew back the foot which he had set at court, and enlisted among the conductors of the *Nain Jaune*. Thence he fired red-hot shot upon us poor royalists who could not help it.

M. Lemercier, M. Tissot, and others, experienced no better reception. Almost all the pensions granted to literary men were withdrawn. It must be confessed that those gentlemen were served an ill turn by all in power about the palace. It seemed as if the ancient nobles, on their return to the Tuilleries, had there picked up again that disgust which the forefathers of their forefathers professed for literature and literary men. They were angry because the latter had more influence with the public than themselves. This little absurdity is of ancient date.

On this subject my father told me of a saying of a Noailles, that was charming for its *naïveté*.

In the heat of the quarrel between Diderot and Jean Jacques Rousseau, which was the topic of general conversation in Paris, M. de Noailles, angry at hearing nothing else talked of wherever he went, exclaimed: "Indeed this is unaccountable; here are two go-barefoots, two tatterdemalions, who lodge in a garret, and cannot get a dinner, making a noise sufficient to stun people. If I were king, two good *lettres de cachet* should rid me of this scandal." There were in Paris in 1814 many people of distinction who thought what M. de Noailles had uttered. They did more: they loaded literary men with humiliations; they exasperated them, and to such a degree that those gentlemen formed a general league against us.

I was thoroughly sensible, notwithstanding my female levity, of the mischief which this discontent of the literati might do us, and how much it was to our interest to win them to our side. I was aware that, though little eaters, they may sometimes be caught with dinners like other men.

But, at the risk of being charged with too great a share of vanity, I must confess that I relied principally upon the coaxing of a young female, who had occasionally succeeded in warming the imaginations of those gentlemen. I gave, therefore, one day, a dinner to a whole little academy, purposely bringing together the writers

of the empire and those of the restoration : M. Lemercier, an original genius, preaching up taste as if to make the *amende honorable* for almost all his works ; M. Tissot, with paternal look and words of unction, whose conversation is a course of belles-lettres, the worthy successor of Delille, and honest enough to have triumphed, in the opinion of honourable people, over an atrocious calumny which could not rob him of any thing but his place ; the worldly-minded Hermit, M. de Jouy ; M. Etienne, whose acute and elegant mind accords so ill with his Auvergnat person ; M. de Feletz, the philosophic abbé ; M. Charles Nodier, who disguises so much exaltation under an air of infantine timidity, a writer endued in particular with extraordinary powers of irony, and who passes his life in praising friends and foes ; M. Merle, who goes halves in the best articles of M. de Jouy's ; Desaugiers, the royalist Anacreon, frequently roguish, never malicious ; lastly, M. Martainville, the Figaro of the good cause, and whose buffooneries have sometimes been acts of boldness and courage.

All these gentlemen sounded one another, and finding that they should scarcely agree upon politics, they gradually gave up that ground, for fear they should be betrayed into too great warmth before a lady. To me they were very amiable, but at the same time they artfully evaded all questions of the moment. Why did

I not then commit to writing all the witty things which dropped from them when the cork was drawn from the third bottle of champagne ! But I was almost angry with them for sporting that day so much wit. I recollect, however, one anecdote of Fouché, which was of use to me for appreciating the character of that man, of whom there are such different opinions. M. Charles Nodier had been his secretary in Illyria, and he related to us that, being appointed to superintend the government newspaper at Trieste, he one day received a letter from the governor, then at Gör-litz, in which Fouché reproached him with his attachment to the Bourbons, and his treacherous connexion with the enemies of the empire. "Give up," he continued, "the management of the *Télégraphe* to the abbé C...., the only person worthy of my confidence, which you have lost for ever." M. Nodier was thunderstruck, and immediately set out for Gör-litz to justify himself. The Duke of Otranto gave him the most cordial welcome: "Has Monseigneur then ascertained my innocence?" enquired the confused secretary; "your letter was rather severe."—"Yes," replied the duke; "but you must confess, that it was an excellent passport for you in case you had not set out immediately; for, two hours after your departure, the English were to enter Trieste."

CHAPTER XV.

The Prince of Conti.—Reflexions.—The Prince of Condé.—Anecdote.—The Duke of Bourbon.—The Duchess of Bourbon.—The Duke of Angoulême.—Count Jules de Polignac.—The Duke of Berry.—Virginie.—The foreign sovereigns at Paris.—Caricature.—Treaty of peace.—Cardinal Gonsalvi.—Conversation of the cardinal with Louis XVIII.

THE Prince of Conti died at Barcelona, on the 31st of March 1814, the very day that fortune declared in favour of his family. Never did man die more unseasonably ; for the rest, he was destined to finish as he began, always setting himself in opposition to circumstances. In 1789 this prince zealously espoused the cause of the revolution, and in 1814 he had come round again completely to the ideas of 1770. It is a melancholy honour for him that the executioners of his family spared his life, and that subsequently they were content with sending him into exile.

With the king there returned to France the remnant of a family of heroes, the two Condés : a third, the youngest of them was wanting ; but alas ! he had reached his native land before his relatives !

After that revolution and that empire which formed, as it were, a violent interruption to our

ancient history, the almost unexpected appearance of the descendants of St. Louis, and the illustrious names which they bore—those names which awakened so many glorious recollections—brought our age somewhat nearer to the grand age of France. After all, fertile in heroes and rich in victories as modern France may be, why should she disown a Condé and a Villars, a Rocroy and a Denain ? But, alas ! deprived of the prince who would have connected their race with the new generation, these descendants of the great Condé were but wrecks of themselves. They were like royal shades, coming to pay a last visit to a world to which they had ceased to belong.

Monseigneur the Prince of Condé arrived among us preceded by his high reputation. We expected him with impatience, ready to pay him the admiration and respect with which his talents and his virtues inspired us. But he was broken down by age and grief: his faculties had almost forsaken him. The august veteran was still full of kindness and grace ; but we should never have recognized in him the man who, for twenty-five years, had so perseveringly struggled against the blind force of the revolution and the interested intrigues of the European sovereigns.

The Prince of Condé was subject to absences of mind, which sometimes gave occasion to very

droll scenes. One day M. de Talleyrand was announced. His ideas became confused; he mistook the nephew for the uncle, and conceived that he was speaking to the Archbishop of Rheims. "Well, Monseigneur," said he, "how do you like France? It is a fine country though more than one dangerous intriguer is left in it. Your nephew, for instance, is a chap who has played us strange tricks. The king listens to him—he is wrong—for the queer fellow will be giving him some dish of his own cooking. For my part, I can place no confidence in unfrocked priests."

I leave the reader to imagine how the ex-prelate, to whom this speech was addressed, must have looked, as well as the gentlemen of the prince's retinue who heard him. One of the latter, M. de Contye, was going to speak, but M. de Talleyrand made him a sign to keep silence. After a few more compliments of the same kind, he rose to withdraw. The Prince of Condé perceiving this, cried out: "Adieu, Monseigneur; I shall always be delighted to chat with you: but, for Heaven's sake, do not bring your nephew with you when you come to see me." I had this anecdote from the Chevalier de Contye, who did not relate it to every body. He testified, at the same time, the extreme desire which his serene highness felt to see France

happy, but without denying his invincible prejudices against the new men and the charter. The Prince of Condé, when he spoke of the charter, among his intimate friends, always called it *Miss Constitution of 1791*.

The Duke of Bourbon, who had behaved in such a distinguished manner abroad, performed little more than a passive part in France. He kept aloof from the court and lived obscurely in retirement: the chace became his most frequent recreation. This indifference to the public applause and this dislike of parade, at first attributed to the painful recollection of a horrid catastrophe, were soon perceived to arise from a desire of the Duke of Bourbon's to withdraw himself from the world. In this he has so well succeeded that, but for some unlucky law-suits which are from time to time recalling the public attention to him, it would not be known whether he is dead or living, in England or in France.

The Duchess of Bourbon, when she returned to France, was not in full possession of her reason. She was confirmed in her insanity by the reveries of illuminism. She fancied that she saw the spectre of the Chevalier de Roquemore continually about her. She spoke to this phantom as though the chevalier had been really present: she asked him questions, answered him, and when she imagined that her mysterious visiter

was retiring, “Adieu, chevalier,” she would say, “adieu; I shall expect you this evening; do not fail.” Very often, when she was talking to a living person, she would stop short all of a sudden, to speak to the poor chevalier. She continued thus deprived of her intellectual faculties till her death, which happened suddenly, I believe in the vault of St. Genevieve.

Now I am upon the Bourbons, I shall continue: it would be too painful to me to stop where I am. His royal highness Monseigneur the Duke of Angoulême commenced his reputation of an excellent prince in the southern provinces. The moment he appeared at Bordeaux and at Toulouse, those cities, from the mere effect of his presence, became eminently royalist. But the affection which every one felt for the Duke of Angoulême applied more particularly to his person, as will be seen by and by.

By his side, moreover, was his royal consort, the Antigone of modern times, the living memento of the sublime testament of Louis XVI.

The Duke of Angoulême was not always seconded in his views of pacification by the petty nobility of the country, who were supported by Prince, then Count, Jules de Polignac, appointed royal commissioner in the tenth military division. This young man, full of honour, was more zealous than enlightened. He ought to have ad-

dressed himself to the good disposition of the people, but suffered himself to be led by the nobility and the clergy. One of my friends, a sensible and intelligent man, the Marquis de Lev.... has related to me extraordinary things concerning the blunders committed by the friends of M. de Polignac. People are still astonished how the restoration could be effected with such agents, and how functions so important could be committed to them in such difficult times.

The Duke of Berry was in no respect like his brother. To use a vulgar expression, which in this case is perfectly just, I should say that they were like fire and water. The Duke of Angoulême was calm and sedate, amiable, or rather attentive, to women, but loving none of them excepting his own wife. The Duke of Berry was fond of them all, yet without gallantry. People have thought fit to misconstrue some of the expressions that escaped his impetuosity; but his natural kindness of heart soon restored his good-humour. He would not have done like Louis XIV, who, on one occasion, threw his cane out of the window, lest he should strike a gentleman with it: had he been provoked, he would probably have dealt a smart blow, but in five minutes he would have begged pardon in such a manner as to obtain it. He had the faults of Henry IV and would have displayed his vir-

tues. Why was he doomed to a fate similar to that of his ancestors !

At his return, the Duke of Berry brought to Paris the English lady to whom he was attached by the tenderest ties. She thought for a moment that the hopes of her whole life were about to be fulfilled : but the dignity of the royal family refused to sanction a union thenceforward so disproportionate with its new fortune : strange resemblance between that alliance broken off by policy, and that of Jerome Bonaparte with Miss Paterson !

It was not long before this prince fell into faults of that kind which M. de Chateaubriand so ingeniously excuses, while invoking the name of the charming Gabrielle. A Parisian bayadere inspired him with a passion which lasted till his death. This divinity of the Opera knew how to play perfectly well the new part to which she was called by the preference of the prince. I shall never forget that, in 1814, at a performance of Castor and Pollux, at which the whole dynasty were present, the public having expressed its enthusiasm by applause, Mademoiselle Virginie, who saw the royal family bow in token of gratitude, also rose in her box and made a low courtesy to the pit. Her waist had then been on the increase for some months. Luckily this inadvertence was not observed ; but several of

my friends and myself, who were so placed as to enjoy this scene, not announced in the bills, laughed heartily at her pretension to share the homage paid to *legitimacy*.

The presence of the foreign sovereigns was disagreeable to Louis XVIII: it reminded him perpetually of the dependence in which he was. The king felt that he should not wield his sceptre freely till he was left alone with his subjects: he feared that till then the French would regard him less in the light of a father than of a master imposed by the bayonet. This idea incessantly haunted him, and he was continually complaining of the stupid blunders of the King of Prussia, and the important airs of the Emperor of Russia, who seemed to treat him as a guest in his own kingdom.

But of all these potentates, the one whom was most disliked, and certainly with the most justice, was his Majesty the Emperor of Austria. He, whom the course of events had led to dethrone his daughter and his grandson, appeared to the French but as a sort of crowned Gerontes. The Bonapartists did him the honour to mutter around him the words perfidy, treason; but they were not aware that he was a man of the very meanest capacity. He was himself sensible, that he was a mere cypher and had the good sense to hide his insignificance behind his *facto-*

tum, M. de Metternich. As a private man Francis I would have been beloved and esteemed : as a sovereign he appeared as ridiculous as possible, and the old French gaiety was revived at his expense.

While on this subject, I recollect a caricature that was made upon him or against him whichever you please. He was represented in splendid carriage, drawn by the Emperor Alexander as coachman, while the Regent of England rode as postillion and the King of Prussia was mounted behind as a footman. Napoleon was running on foot fastened to the door of the carriage, and saying to the Emperor of Austria : “ Father-in-law, *they have put me out*,” to which Francis replied : “ *and me in*.” To understand this joke, it must be supposed that the father-in-law had no notion, in dethroning Napoleon, of depriving his grandson of the crown. In fact Louis XVIII has assured me that the allied princes, till their entry into Paris, lulled the Emperor of Austria with hopes that the regency of France would be entrusted to Maria Louisa till the King of Rome should attain his majority. But it was inconsistent with the intentions of England that the government should remain in other hands than those of the Bourbons, to whom it legitimately reverted ; and after the Emperor of Austria had lent his happy aid against his own family,

he was told that he must sacrifice his private interest to the tranquillity of Europe. This was the way in which he had been *put in*. It may not be amiss to observe too, that by means of a little diplomatic *pot de vin* of a few millions, Metternich was induced to counsel his master strenuously in our favour.

In the evening of the day on which the three foreign sovereigns set out, the king said to me: " Now I begin to breathe, I am now alone face to face with France. God be with their militant majesties, but may He deliver me from their presence!"

This prayer was not wholly fulfilled. Alexander and Frederic William, who were gone to England, merely to be admitted doctors of law in the University of Oxford, returned to Paris. It was during this visit that they signed the treaty of peace restoring France to her ancient limits, and considerably reducing her territory. The law of the stronger was rigidly enforced. In vain did our diplomatists dispute the ground in the best manner they could; the foreign statesmen gave them to understand that if Louis XVIII was not satisfied with what they granted him he might leave it for Maria Louisa. To no purpose did we protest; they seemed determined to wrest from the weakness of legitimacy what they had yielded to the violence of the

empire. The king was in consequence deeply afflicted, and more than once, when the courtiers were suffering their ridiculous enthusiasm for the allies to run away with them, Louis XVIII shrugged his shoulders, saying to me in a low tone : “ The song is right—*Nos chers amis les ennemis.*”

Louis XVIII spent a good deal of time, especially soon after his restoration, in transacting business with his ministers. Hence he soon conceived a very mean idea of them. He called the Abbé de Montesquiou a *parade horse*. In speaking of M. d’André he said : *that good Monsieur d’André*. He never called M. Dupont any other than *my friend Dupont*; and he said of Baron Louis that he knew how not to neglect his own business while he attended to that of the State, Forming so correct an estimate of all his ministers, he deemed the other European sovereigns fortunate in having in their cabinets men of abilities, whom he had not in his. For Cardinal Gonsalvi in particular he professed the highest esteem.

Cardinal Gonsalvi, prime minister of Pius VII united with admirable frankness all the subtle suppleness of the Italian character. Though a priest, he was favourable to the diffusion of instruction and knowledge. Devoted to the head of the church, as man never was to his master, he struggled with persevering

energy against the mighty despotism of Napoleon. His character combined great mildness and at the same time great strength. The ex-emperor who scrutinized men at a glance and delineated them in a word, said of him : " He is a lion covered with a sheep-skin." Nothing can be more accurate than this description.

I have observed that the king had a high esteem for Cardinal Gonsalvi. Chatting with him one day, " Your Eminence," said he, " people wish me to re-establish the convents."

" I would advise you to do so, Sire," replied the cardinal, " on the same day that you revive the parliaments."

" They solicit me also to appoint a minister for the clergy. I would comply if it were possible to appoint you."

" Sire," answered Gonsalvi, " the church of this country has received a severe lesson ; God grant that it may profit by it ! For my part, Sire, I must confess that the moment of my life most dangerous for my modesty is that in which your Majesty has just given me so flattering a testimony of your esteem.

I was one day indiscreet enough to ask this cardinal if it is true that the pope is infallible ?

" Madam," replied he, " that is an article of faith at Rome." Methinks this answer, if not very apostolic, is at least that of a sensible man.

CHAPTER XVI.

Intrigues of gallantry.—The Duke of R....Prince F. G.... Madame....and her husband.—The Countess of G....and her three lovers.—Prince Eugene Beauharnais.—His unpublished letter to the Emperor of Russia.—His interview with Louis XVIII.—Madame de Staél.—Cardinal Maury.

IN my little vanity I flatter myself that I am writing for our future historians ; but I am not writing history : I shall therefore introduce here a few anecdotes by way of digression, without attending strictly to chronological dates.

According to the growlers of the empire, the new court was a Capuchin friary :* there was nothing but plaintive emigrants wholly occupied in regretting the past ; but our pretended saints had also their peccadilloes, and one might have compiled at leisure a little scandalous chronicle. Here follows just a specimen.

A certain duke and peer had brought back from

* The epigram upon two great names of that period is well known :

“ On demande des mœurs ! disait le Comte Argant ;
Hélas ! auprès de moi ma femme revienne.
On demande des mœurs ! disait l'abbé Dorant ;
Hélas ! il faut enfin répudier la mienne !”

emigration all the tastes and all the habits of the great personages of the time of Louis XV. He soon contracted debts which he never paid, and forgot that he had a wife in order to indulge himself with a mistress whom he kept with money got, Heaven knows how! Methinks I hear you say—that must be a very bad man.—By no means; he belongs to the congregation, and is reckoned a good Frenchman, eminently religious and monarchical.

There was at Paris at the same period one of those females who, fond of pleasure and money, procure the one by giving the other. The female in question was no longer young, but, as she had a certain reputation in her profession, she had plenty of customers as in her best days. She had married a man of quality, a soldier and author, who had fought bravely during the emigration, and who had since written some wretched pamphlets.

The duke and peer could not behold the painted charms of Madame de.... without feeling for her a passion which he no longer felt for his lawful wife. He declared his flame; but the fortress was taken. Prince G.... a young Russian, and very rich, had on entering Paris made a conquest of Madame de...., and there was no likelihood that she would forsake a foreign nobleman who paid well, for a French nobleman who had

not a sou. Our poor duke was grieved to see that the lady had so little *nationality*.

About this time Lord Wellington gave a splendid party at his hotel, Faubourg Saint Honoré. Madame de...appeared there with her husband, the compulsory satellite, and escorted by her happy lover and her unfortunate admirer, her volunteer body-guard. The entertainment was superb. The noble lord had here displayed all the gallantry of an Englishman. By the most amiable foresight, the alleys were magnificently lighted, while the thickets were left in their mysterious darkness so favourable to love. The kind husband had fastened upon the Russian prince, and the latter was lost in the mazes of a long conversation on the *steppes* of Muscovy.

I know not how matters were arranged, but the duke and peer and Madame de.....had meanwhile strolled into one of those mysterious thickets, and having there found a turf seat they sat down. For once in his life the disdained lover was eloquent and persuasive. Madame de....ceased to be cruel, the duke ceased to despair, when all at once appeared Prince G...., restless as a Turk since he has lost sight of the better half of his pitiless questioner. He found himself betrayed ; he overwhelmed the perfidious woman with the most abusive names, with the most contemptuous epithets. The French duke, having

somewhat recovered from his first astonishment; keenly reproached the Russian prince for his unpoliteness; the latter replied in the same strain; the quarrel grew warm, the two rivals perceived that they had each a sword and drew, while the lady, well knowing that the death of a man killed on her account would cause her to be talked of, gave the gentlemen abundant leisure to fight by making believe to swoon.

While the Frenchman and Russian were crossing their swords, the honest husband, who was running after his interlocutor, with an ample provision of inquisitive questions, hearing the clash of weapons, rushed bravely between the rivals. "Ho, gentlemen! ho, my dear friends! stop! What are you about? The war between Russia and France is over. Every combat between Russians and French is almost as bad as a civil war: put up those swords with which you are armed for the sacred cause of our princes!"

At these peaceful words, the combatants, who probably desired nothing more, paused. M. de..... took each of them by the arm and led them back to the rooms. And the lady? you will ask, what became of her? At the voice of her husband, she had decently put an end to her fainting fit, and hid herself behind a tree, where, seeing that the affair had gone off, she adjusted her robe which was somewhat rumpled in her ner-

vous attack, and then came back by herself and mingled with the dancers.

After this adventure prince G.... broke with Madame de.... The latter, being forced to return definitively to more patriotic amours, satisfied the French duke so well respecting the past, that she has ever since been living at his expense, and a little upon the profits of a certain enterprize, which she and her husband have vied with each other in carrying on ever since it was set on foot. I shall not name the masks, but they are universally known. I continue my episodic digressions.

The Countess of G.... was just married at the moment of the restoration. Her father-in-law, her mother-in-law, and her husband were all what were then called pure royalists. As for the young woman, she was timid, mild, modest as an Agnes. On the day that the allies entered Paris, the father-in-law, the mother-in-law and husband, who went to meet our good friends, returned to the hotel, each bringing a foreigner: the husband an Englishman, the mother-in-law a Prussian, and the father-in-law a German. Each of the royalists strove to surpass the others in attentions to the guests whom they had the felicity to possess. The little countess alone continued indifferent amidst the joy of the family. She was reproached for her want of attachment

to the good cause, and enjoined to treat in the best possible manner the brave men who had come to restore to us our king.

The husband first requested the Englishman to teach his wife to ride; the marquise begged the Prussian to conduct her to the ball; and the marquis, who perceived that the German was an amateur of the fine arts, recommended to him to go to see the Museums with his daughter. In short, the countess was speedily led into the commission of a folly. When I say one, it is three I mean; for she would not shew any preference. She was handsome, but not clever. The triple intrigue was soon discovered, and the poor young woman's shame made public. The husband, the father-in-law, and the mother-in-law, excellent people, whose royalism after all did not go so far as that, made a great outcry, and vented their anger on the culprit. "Indeed," said she, "it was not my fault, I merely did what you bade me. You desired me to treat those gentlemen in the best possible manner: of course, it was my duty not to refuse them any thing."

This adventure made a noise. We talked of it at the palace; Louis XVIII laughed heartily at this new species of loyalty, and as he was fond of repaying one anecdote by another, he related to us that a lady of distinction, the old Marquise de M.... had offered herself as a reward to the

sub-officers of the late imperial guard who should cry *Vive le Roi!* But the old marquise found the grumblers of the empire so refractory, that she could not succeed in drawing forth from them ever so faint a cry.

During these days of the joyous saturnalia of royalism, the husbands of these loyal ladies also carried on intrigues in their way. These gentlemen who had obtained (God knows how) the rank of lieutenant-general, aspired to the staff of marshal of France. According to their notions, a Massena, a Soult, a Davoust, an Oudinot, should have been deprived of their truncheons, for the purpose of their being given to them. Their discontent was increased when they learned that the ex-Viceroy of Italy, Eugene Beauharnais, was coming to Paris. They conceived that, deserting the cause of adversity, the son of Josephine was about to range himself among the courtiers of the King of France, and, consequently, to be an additional competitor for royal favour; for it would have been a complete triumph to legitimacy, to enlist under its banner a prince of the imperial manufacture. Louis XVIII would have received him with open arms, and placed more reliance upon him than upon any other person, so highly did he estimate his noble character.

But, while that madman, Murat, was betraying

his brother-in-law, with an ingratitude which was subsequently to prove so fatal to him, Prince Eugene was not to be shaken by the most urgent solicitations and the most splendid offers of the allies. To my certain knowledge, the grand-duchy of Genoa was proposed to him by the cabinets of London, Vienna, and St. Petersburg. On this subject the Emperor Alexander even wrote him a letter with his own hand, to which the Viceroy returned the following answer:

“Sire,

“I have received the proposals of your Majesty: they have certainly appeared to me very handsome, but they will not change my determination. I must have sported with misfortune when I had the honour to see you, since you have formed an opinion that I could forfeit my honour for any price whatever. Neither the prospect of the duchy of Genoa, nor that of the kingdom of Italy, would induce me to be a traitor. The example of the King of Naples cannot seduce me: I had rather become again a soldier, than a disgraced sovereign.

“The emperor, you say, has done me wrong: I have forgotten it—I remember nothing but his favours. To him I owe every thing, my rank, my titles, my fortune; and I owe to him what I prefer to all these, what your indulgence is

pleased to term my glory. I will serve him as long as he lives: my person is his as well as my heart. May my sword break in my hands, if it ever betrays the Emperor of France! I flatter myself that my refusal will ensure me the esteem of your Imperial Majesty.

“I am, Sire,” &c.

Alexander was capable of appreciating such conduct. When he went to see Josephine at Malmaison, he shewed her this magnanimous letter of her son's. The empress asked him for it, but he would only give a copy; and I am indebted for that which I have just transcribed to the senator Beauharnais.

Prince Eugene, driven from Milan by a popular insurrection, came direct to Paris. He arrived at his mother's at Malmaison, on the 9th of May; and on the 10th was admitted to an audience by the king. There had been considerable discussion respecting the manner in which he was to be received, and the title that was to be given him. To allow him merely that of viscount would have been ridiculous; to give him that of prince, would have glaringly compromised the legitimate dignity of the new dynasty. To obviate all difficulty, it was agreed to give him the title of Marshal of France.

The old Duke d'Aumont having introduced

Prince Eugene, "*Monsieur le Maréchal de France*," said the king to the latter, "I am very glad to see you." The prince, who was about to make his compliment, paused in astonishment, and looked round to discover to whom the king could be speaking. Louis XVIII, perceiving his surprise, added with a gracious smile, "It is you, sir, who are Marshal of France: it is a dignity with which I am delighted to invest you."

"Sire," replied Eugene, "I am much obliged to your Majesty for your good-will; but the misfortune of the rank to which Providence has raised me forbids my acceptance of the noble title with which you would honour me. I refuse it,—but with a feeling of the profoundest gratitude."

The king was not prepared for this answer: it embarrassed him the more, inasmuch as he had hugged himself upon the contrivance as a *ruse de guerre*, and hoped in this manner to take the future marshal by surprise. Still retaining, however, his former affability, he expressed to Prince Eugene the sorrow he felt at not being permitted to include so valiant a captain among the leaders of his army. Prince Eugene then said, that, vanquished by circumstances, he thenceforward desired nothing but peace and obscurity; and that he was going to devote the rest of his life to his mother, satisfied with that protection which the sovereign owes to every peaceable subject.

The firm resistance of Eugene threw the king into a really ill-humour. To him it was a little check, to the advantage of Napoleon. This example, it is true, was not contagious: all the other military chiefs of the empire lost no time in assuring the king of their submission and of the warm desire they felt to serve him.

After Prince Eugene and after the 12th of May, another celebrated contemporary arrived at Paris. She was received by me with transport: she came, still eager after bustle and glory, to recommence the printing of her work "On Germany," which had already been once destroyed by the police. She flattered herself that the court, forgetting that she was the daughter of M. Necker, would receive her with open arms and allow her to assume that influence which suited the activity of her genius. This was a mistake: she was soon undeceived. The king said to me, "Here's a Chateaubriand in petticoats come among us." A step lower Madame de Stael found all the old principles, all the old antipathies, armed to the very teeth. She was received at court with that cold politeness which is more terrible than abuse. Her vexation caused her to carry part of her literary incense to Lord Wellington and the Emperor Alexander: she reverted at times to our legitimate princes; still they persisted in treating her as an author rather than as a poten-

tate or even a minister ; they laughed at her advice and even attacked the glory of M. Necker. "I sport with misfortune," said she to me ; "Napoleon detested me because he believed that I possessed talent ; these repulse me because I have common sense. For the rest," added she, "I can do very well without them ; but since my presence annoys them, I will strive not to leave them my money." She alluded to a sum of two millions, lent, I believe, by her father to the public treasury ; a sum which neither the directory nor the emperor would ever consent to reimburse, and which she could not wrest from the monarchy without some little sacrifices. To get back her two millions, I think it cost Madame de Staél four hundred thousand francs, besides a present of engraved stones worth at least one hundred thousand. A great service deserves a little present. As for Louis XVIII he never suspected but that this liquidation was the simplest affair in the world ; he had cheerfully given his signature : but two millions do not pass from hand to hand, even when they are given in annuities on the great book.

It was not long before Madame de Staél was apprised of the honours which I enjoyed in the intimacy of a high personage.

"Take advantage of it, my dear," said she to me ; "but lose no time, for as matters are going

on, I am afraid that before long the restoration will be restored."

"How am I to understand that?" replied I, laughing.

"I mean that, with the exception of the king, who perhaps does not say all that he thinks, the others are doing just as they formerly did, and God knows whither their folly may yet lead them. They jeer old soldiers and support young priests: it is the readiest way to ruin France."

I considered this prediction of Madame de Staél's as the offspring of her discontent; for the rest, she consoled herself for the slight offered her at court with receiving at her house the best company in Paris. There she ridiculed all the great personages towards whom she could indulge in this irreverence; but she had only one opportunity of rallying an individual who, after shining for some time with extraordinary lustre on the political stage, expired in ignominious obscurity. I mean cardinal Maury.

It may be recollected with what eloquence, firmness, and presence of mind, he defended the rights of the church and of the monarchy in the constituent assembly. By supporting so good a cause with his great talents the abbé Maury attracted general admiration. But, as he had espoused this cause solely to acquire a name and

a fortune, he deserted it as soon as he could for the imperial livery; his ambition had enjoyed long enough the honours of his fidelity.

Ungrateful towards the King of France, ungrateful towards the Pope, he basely prostrated himself at the feet of Napoleon. I have seen him, under the empire, seeking to obtain the oblivion of a glory which had become a burden; I have seen him compensating the esteem which he had lost by the money which he was getting given to him; no longer an object of envy, but of pity and contempt—a melancholy-example for those who cannot find their greatness within themselves.

The return of the king gave him a mortal wound; from that moment he began to languish; his cruelly disappointed ambition became the vulture that gnawed his liver. I had occasion to know his remorse. "Ah!" said he to me, "could I but have foreseen the height which I might now have attained, the part which I might now have performed!"

He conceived, and no doubt justly, that royalty would have accounted to him for what he had formerly done in its behalf; that the dignity of peer, nay the ministry itself, would have rewarded eminent fidelity and distinguished talent. Providence, however, had decreed otherwise, and

the cardinal would gladly have sacrificed half his eloquence for a small portion of the subtlety of the ex-Bishop of Autun ; but the latter too had soon reason to grumble.

C H A P T E R X V I I .

Prince de Talleyrand at court.—The king at the Museum.—His opinion of modern painting.—M. Denon.—Love intrigue.—Lord Wellington.—The secret government.—The duke of Duras at the Théâtre Français.—The Duke d'Autmont at the Feydeau.—The last royal commissioner.

IN sound morals, the restoration ought, from the very first day, to have drawn a line of demarcation between the goats and the sheep ; but in sound politics it is right not to disdain the talents of any individual. It is more particularly important not to appear ungrateful toward those whose services we have been forced to accept. It had been well ascertained that the Prince de Talleyrand had contributed to the recall of the Bourbons ; but it was soon observed that in so doing he had consulted his own interests more than those of legitimacy. This was possible, nay it was true ; but it was very injudicious to make him sensible of it. On the one hand, the high clergy envied the fortune of M. de Talleyrand, and the influence which that statesman

enjoyed in Europe; on the other, political men dreaded his superiority. For the purpose of removing him from the court, they strove to render him disagreeable. He had too much sagacity not to see this, and too much cunning to betray that he had perceived it. He felt all the delicacy of his situation, and he sought to extricate himself from it with honour; but it was very difficult to accomplish this object. M. de Blacas, in the first place, strove by all the means in his power to keep aloof a rival who would have been dangerous to him, and to whom he was afraid to afford opportunity to discover his insignificance—as if the insignificance of M. de Blacas had not already been discovered by all the world.

The king too, unfortunately, began to be dissatisfied. He imagined that it was the secret intention of Prince de Talleyrand to play the regent, and this wounded his self-love. He communicated to him no important secret, never asked his opinion but in council, and never invited him to those private conversations, in which, in fact, all matters of business were decided: nay, he even received him with a coldness somewhat too sincere.

I frequently saw the prince. He came to me because he knew that I went to see the king. He recapitulated his grievances and said to me:

“ I have done a great deal for them, and I could be of service to them. They wish to have nothing more to do with me—so much the worse for them. They listen only to drivellers who have not learned even the political alphabet. Let them beware; they may repent it, if the lion should ever awake.”—I endeavoured to cheer him up under his disgrace. He then resumed his good-humour and his subtlety, praised the royal family, calculating that I should repeat what he said, and ridiculing the illustrious personages of the new court, thoroughly persuaded that I should not betray him. When I next saw the king, I tried to speak to him concerning M. de Talleyrand, but he amused himself with talking about Miss Grant, and God knows how many injurious things he said of her. Poor Miss Grant! to say that she was as beautiful as she was simple, was the highest compliment that could be paid to her beauty.

The king meanwhile sought to win the love of the people. With this view he shewed himself as much as possible. He went every day to mass, appeared at the balcony of the hall of the marshals, and by laying his hand upon his heart, according to his custom, thanked the royalists for the acclamations with which he was greeted. To flatter the artists, he went to the Museum, then in all its splendour. He in-

spected it with attention : but he was obliged to do himself violence, that he might not hazard opinions which would have embroiled him with modern painting. He had passed his youth amidst the glory of Vanloo and Boucher, and he was still imbued with the bad taste of those painters.

On the evening of the day that the king had visited the Museum, I saw him at the palace. He was up to the eyes in painting ; he told me that he thought it all superb. " And yet," added he, " I should have preferred France as far as the Rhine."

" Ah, Sire!" I replied, " if the artists did but hear you!"

" There are no artists here. The Duke de Blacas does not like them any more than I do. In my time better pictures were produced. The arts are lost in France." Such was, exactly as I repeat it, the language held by Louis XVIII ; it has since been attributed, but unjustly, to the Duke of Berry. Monseigneur the Duke of Berry, was the only one of the royal family, who was fond of painting, without being more of a connoisseur than his uncle. But it was reserved for his illustrious consort to introduce into France that enlightened taste for the arts, which two queens of the Medici family had formerly brought from Italy.

God keep me, good royalist that I am, from doubting for a moment the infallibility of a legitimate monarch in politics, and his omnipotence in the application of his civil list : but, in matters of wit and taste a king may be wrong like the meanest of his subjects. As for his majesty Louis XVIII, few persons possessed more tact in disguising his real thoughts in his public compliments. It was only to his most particular intimates that he expressed his private opinions on the arts and literature, artists and literary characters. Careful to spare the feelings of all, he repressed the spontaneousness of his reflexions on men and things. Though he was astonishingly clever at saying amiable things on the spur of the occasion, he consented to make what I shall call a vocabulary of parade. A great number of those charming sayings of his, which have been circulated, were prepared beforehand ; I had sometimes the first edition of them in the morning ; and, on many occasions, I have myself furnished biographical notes concerning the persons who were not admitted to his presence till they had been at least twenty-four hours upon the list laid before his Majesty. Alas ! yes, the most witty of kings was condemned to make *official wit*.

Nay more, such is the complaisance of certain journals, that they have more than once attributed

to Louis XVIII ingenious or sublime answers, which he never made, but which he did not care to deny. Such is the famous *Vive le Roi quand même*, which I believe originated with M. Charles Nodier.

For the rest, it was a pleasure to give lessons to the king. He had an excellent memory; he never made a mistake in the application of a compliment; he never took one mask instead of another: but sometimes this comedy of royalty wearied him: and perhaps it is to fatigue and impatience that we ought to attribute certain contradictions, which fell from him after a long reception or a royal visit to some public place. But, to return to painting—I have remarked that he gradually became accustomed to the style of our artists and that he insensibly corrected his taste. The wealth of the Museum flattered him as a monarch; he took pleasure in saying *my Louvre*; and after the second restoration he joined heartily in the regrets excited by the spoliation of our galleries of the arts.

So early as 1814 he had to defend those treasures against singular enemies. Some mitred idiots proposed that the religious pieces should be given to the churches, and that the profane paintings, in which the naked figure corrupted youth, should be burned. For that time the king sent them away with a flea in their ear. But

were there not in the palace drivellers, who were of the same way of thinking, and would gladly have repeated the follies of the Duke de Mazarin ? I have been told that the Duchess de C...., among others, had masses said, that fire from heaven might consume the Museum.

M. Denon, who was then director of the Museum, was one of the most amiable and best informed men of the time. Formerly page of the chapel, he had retained the polished manners of the old court, and to this he was indebted for the favour of Napoleon. He was fond of the fine arts ; and I make this observation, because in France it is not in general considered whether the man suits the place but whether the place suits the man.

For the rest, M. Denon had, like every body else, his little whims and oddities. He preferred, for instance, a lacquered box to a picture by a great master. When past fourscore, he fancied himself still young, and capable of captivating the sex ; and that not from foppery but merely to prolong the illusions of his best days. Notwithstanding these absurdities, he was beloved by all his acquaintance, and I can assert that at his death he carried with him the regret of all honest people.

The king remembered him perfectly well and in consequence treated him very graciously. He

talked to him of past times, the dates of which the director of the Museum strove precisely to forget, and reminded him of an anecdote of the days of yore. This anecdote, which the king related to me with his royal lips, is well worth recording.

There was at the palace of Versailles a Marquise de B...., who was extremely beautiful, could not endure her husband, and picked up lovers wherever she could. One day she espied M. Denon, who was then young and frisky, walking in the garden, and she was suddenly smitten with him. He was then no more than sixteen or seventeen, and a person of no importance. She wrote to him, giving him an assignation, but without signing her name. The place appointed was in Paris, in a street of the Marais, with which Denon was unacquainted. The page, delighted with this mysterious good fortune, made himself as spruce as possible, hastened to Paris, and went direct to the Marais. But how was he to find the unknown street where the unknown lady resided? While the young Denon was looking about on all sides, he saw a gentleman apparently of respectability approaching. He accosted him and requested him to direct him to the street which he wanted to find. This gentleman replied, that there were two streets of the name in that quarter, and asked if he had no other direction. A lover is sometimes indiscreet, and so

was young Denon. He took his letter from his pocket and shewed it to the gentleman, who, after examining the hand-writing with a look of astonishment, said that he now knew the place for which he was enquiring; and taking him by the arm he conducted him to the house. There he wished him good day and went about his business. The delighted Denon entered, and found an abigail who introduced him to the lady of his thoughts. Great was his surprise on recognizing the Marquise de B.... She was not far from forty, but she was not to be disdained by a page of the chapel.

He was already seated by her side, pouring forth a thousand vows of love—those vows of youth, which a woman is obliged to believe—when, all of a sudden, a concealed door opened, and some one entered; who should it be but the gentleman with whom he had just parted, the husband of the lady!

“Madam,” said he, “I beg pardon for disturbing you, but another time be more particular in giving your address. But for me, this gentleman could not have found you; and it is rather disagreeable to me to have to conduct your gallants to their assignations myself.”

Monsieur thereupon shut the door and went his way. Our lovers, who were at first somewhat daunted, soon resumed their courage, and matters went on in the best possible manner.

Conscience, however, whispered in the ear of the young Denon that, having offended the Marquis de B. . . ., he owed him reparation for the injury. Having met him in the state apartments, he went to him, and paid his compliments.

"My boy," replied the marquis, "I cannot in conscience treat you as guilty. My wife accustoms me daily to forgive such peccadilloes. If I had killed all your predecessors, Versailles would now be uninhabited. Take my advice; for the peace of your soul be no more jealous than I am."

Such were the manners of the ancient court. Denon formerly related this adventure to any one who chose to listen to him. Louis XVIII, whose memory was prodigious, had not forgotten it. As for me, I recollect it because it was related to me a few days after the visit to the Museum, and a few days before the first audience of the Duke of Wellington; this naturally leads me to speak of that nobleman.

Almost all those persons of the old *régime* who were denominated *ultras* and *voltigeurs* of *Louis XIV* professed the highest admiration of the Duke of Wellington. Notwithstanding Madame de Staél, I never could account for this infatuation. In point of military talents, the British hero was not quite a Turenne—no offence to a certain song-writer—and his silly-looking

face was not made to awe. I have heard him also compared to the Prince of Condé. Has he then that eagle-look which was so prepossessing in the hero of Rocroi? No; his looks have no other expression than that of excessive vanity. Still he had left him for the purpose of pleasing his character of conqueror, and since it must be confessed to the shame of our sex, his foppery itself. Alas! yes; we sometimes love a coxcomb, as the men love a coquet.

For my part, he appeared to me most ridiculous the first time I saw him. With what a silly respect he treated his own greatness! What pretension there was in his attitudes! what vanity in every gesture! By the manner in which he received the advances of certain celebrated frail-ones, it was obvious that, as far women were concerned, he had kept none but bad company; and Harriette Wilson has since revealed to us, that there he makes his most brilliant conquests.

Louis XVIII had no more esteem for him than I, but he was obliged, by the force of circumstances to dissemble and to treat the Englishman with high consideration. He even went so far as to confer on him the *baton* of Marshal of France. This was not granted, as it may easily be conceived, without many intrigues; and moreover, the king consented to bestow this rank as

a secret favour only, and on condition that no almanack in his kingdom should ever give the the duke a title which—no offence to foreigners —belongs by right to a French general alone.

I shall remark, that from this moment Louis XVIII never once uttered the name of the English marshal in the circle of his intimate friends; excepting upon occasion of the ridiculous affair of the pretended pistol-shot, of which I shall speak in due time and place. He seemed, indeed, to be ashamed of what had been extorted from his weakness, and to make reparation to himself by inserting in the charter the article which retained the order of the Legion of Honour, and that in spite of all the oppositions, feminine and masculine, of the palace. On this account Madame de D.... termed the king a jacobin, and the Duke of M.... seriously proposed to require him to abdicate, as Charles IV was required to do. One would suppose that Louis XVIII was criminal merely because he was reasonable.

Monsieur meanwhile fell dangerously ill. This circumstance served certain courtiers as a pretext for hypocritical wailings, which might have produced in the king a coolness towards his august brother. According to them, the monarchy was likely to lose its sheet-anchor; for they flattered themselves that Monsieur, on his accession to

the throne, would resume that absolute power, which his brother had relinquished. From this party proceeded those imprudent measures, those senseless circulars, which alarmed all France. The nation, confounding Monsieur with those about him, then began to fear that this prince, who has since consolidated the charter, would become its professed adversary.

No sooner had Louis XVIII commenced his reign, than the first gentlemen, the Dukes de Duras and d'Aumont, began to claim theirs also; that is to say, the Duke de Duras, the absolute government of the *Comédie Française*, and the Duke d'Aumont that of the *Opéra Comique*. They both alleged that the restoration would not be complete, unless they were both reinstated in those rights which they derived from their titles. The good Duke de Duras, for example, declared, with that charming simplicity, hereditary in his family, that the gentlemen of the bed-chamber had the superintendence of the French theatre from before the time of Charlemagne. There was no replying to this. The Duke de Duras therefore resumed the ancient rights of Messieurs the first gentlemen, only that he had not, like his predecessors of the last century, an exclusive authority over his tragic and comic subjects. There was now no way of send-

ing Nero to the Bastille and Iphigenia to Fort l'Evêque. The Théâtre Français had formed itself into a republic, and what is worse, into a republic of kings and queens. It was a melancholy thing for the pleasures of the public, and still more melancholy for the pretensions of M. de Duras. Forced, in this case also, to respect a charter, the poor duke became by and by content with the honorary advantages of his government; he appointed responsible ministers, and even exercised with reserve the right of patronising from time to time certain ingenious persons.

The Duke d'Aumont, on his part, found that it was no easy task to maintain harmony in the singing company of the Opéra Comique. He is charged with being somewhat of a busy-body: but perhaps the blame should be laid on his subordinates. Till last year, the Duke d'Aumont was not aware of the discredit thrown upon him by continual law-suits. Every body knows how they have terminated.

But I shall have occasion to revert to the theatres and their petty internal cabals. Their history is interesting to France, for therein consists her principal literary glory. I have even had opportunities of making myself thoroughly acquainted with the policy of the kings and

queens of the rue Richelieu, and I can relate particulars concerning them which will, I believe, be new to my readers.

The year 1814 was the period of their greatest prosperity. Since that time, the exchequer and, as others say, taste, have run many risks. If I continue my Memoirs to 1826, I shall perhaps examine if Mr. Taylor, who has been sent to their assistance on the difficult mission to retain the past and to create the future, is capable of performing it: I am quite ready before-hand to believe that he is. What makes the augur so well of Mr. Taylor is, that, as an artist and a poet, he is fond of every thing that concerns the arts and literature; that there is in him something chivalrous which exempts him from the suspicion of venality; that his dignity has never been compromised by a somewhat too tender courtesy for any favourite, so that for the six years that he has reigned as vizir among our theatrical odalisques, he has not had a single mistress among them. He is the Scipio of dramatic managers. If I appear severe when I enter upon the vital question concerning the management itself, it will not be without having first proved my impartiality.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Some recollections of Louis XVIII.—Count de Barruel.
Beauvert.—Chevalier de Fonvielle.—M. Trenueil.—Countess de Genlis.—The life-guards and the national-guards.—Quarrel at the palace.—Ambition of the clergy.—The Duke de Fitz-James.—The Duke de Maillé.—M. de Balainvilliers.

THE king dated his acts from the nineteenth year of his reign; and he was fond of referring sometimes in conversation to a period when, as he said, if his advice had been followed, the crown would never have devolved to him.

“ I exhorted the king,” said Louis XVIII. “ to keep pace with the age, and to make concessions to men, who were no longer to be confined within the traditions, formerly so sacred, of the monarchy of Louis XIV; I advised him to reduce the possessions of the clergy, to leave in France but one convent in twenty, and also to limit the number of the monks to be admitted into them; to diminish the annual revenue of every archbishopric to fifty thousand francs, and that of each bishopric to thirty thousand; and to apply the rest of the revenues of the church to the reduction of the total amount of the taxes; to subject the nobility and magistracy to all

territorial charges; to throw open public offices to the third estate, as to the other orders; to abolish *lettres de cachet*; to give full liberty to the press; to convoke the states-general every three years; and after that to arm himself with firmness and to punish the factious with the rigour of the laws. Assuredly, this was the only way to consolidate the throne and to prevent the revolution. I was not attended to. The moment I talked of taking any thing from the nobility and the clergy, the courtiers cried out, that I was for transferring the sovereign power to the *canaille*; and at the queen's I was accused of ambition, and almost of an intention to usurp the throne. The most prudent representations were all ill received. They were disregarded, till the increasing irritability of the public mind caused it to deem each new concession insufficient. I was obliged to take flight, and when the king would have done the same, it was too late." This is what Louis XVIII said to me, on occasion of the audience which he granted to M. Descloseaux, proprietor of the cemetery of la Madelaine, where the mortal remains of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette had been religiously preserved. When it was ascertained that the precious relics of these august martyrs still existed, a plan was formed for removing them with due ceremony to St. Denis; but I shall

speak of this at the proper time. I wished to prove here that the charter was not a sudden inspiration of 1814.

Not only the ultras of the provinces, but also the ultras of the faubourg St. Germain, have dared to call Louis XVIII a crowned jacobin. The king was certainly not fond of regicides; he nevertheless deemed it necessary to pardon them. As their only punishment he took from them the places which they held; and this was not done all at once, but with a sort of urbanity and delicacy which displeased many. It appeared natural that the king should expel from France, without any trial, the murderers of his family, whose presence was likely to be a continual torment to *Madame royale*. But the king strove to unite all parties without disconcerting any, under the idea that this concord, or if you please this mutual forgiveness, was requisite for the re-establishment of domestic peace.

I saw about this time at the palace certain personages, on whom, in return for the attentions which they lavished on me, I shall take leave to bestow a little immortality, not having always been able to do justice to their royalist ambition.

The first whose name occurs to my pen is a Count de Barruel-Beauvert, a native of Languedoc, who for his boasting and romancing is worthy of being a Gascon. He entitled himself

colonel of infantry, because he had commanded for a few months the national guards of his little town. According to his own account, he is another of those who have achieved the counter-revolution single-handed: but the Chevalier de Fonvielle would not willingly resign to him his share in that glory.

The Chevalier de Fonvielle, a petty citizen of Toulouse, claimed to be descended from the Kings of Arragon. As poor as a rat prior to 1789, a bit of a patriot in 1793, he subsequently published to the glory of Napoleon a thick book, the expressions in which he now tortures for the purpose of giving them a royalist signification.

He has moreover the mania of putting himself in print, and that at the expense of his friends, by persuading them to subscribe to his Fables, his Memoirs, and all that he calls his poetry and his prose. He requested me to speak to the king in his behalf; and I replied at once that I recommended nobody to his majesty, and especially persons who were absolute strangers to me. He then asked, with a look of surprise, if I had not read his works? and I answered, with a look of ingenuousness, that I had not. Two hours afterwards I received a collection of pamphlets signed Fonvielle. Heavy as this present was, I had the vanity to be pleased with it, because I considered it as an homage to my

political knowledge; but, in a few days, a clerk brought me a bill for Fonvielle's works, with a receipt underneath. I paid it, somewhat disappointed in my hope of a disinterested compliment. I have heard since from Count Fabre de l'Aude and Baron de Puymorin that M. Fonvielle has not sold his works in any other way.

I saw also a Monsieur, or Abbé, Treneuil, whichever you please. He was, like M. de Fonvielle, a man who could eat out of two mangers. He had accommodated himself perfectly well to the empire, and he accommodated himself just as easily to the restoration. When he perceived that the latter was approaching, he set about composing some little innocent and plaintive poems, against the emperor, which, he alleged, procured him from the ruler the honour of imprisonment. One evening, he was reciting at my house one of these elegiac satires. When he had done, he began to extol himself, and more especially the courage he had shewn in thus writing against the tyrant. "Why, yes," rejoined a Provençal noble, who was present, "Napoleon must be a horrible tyrant indeed, to punish such verses, that contain nothing for which one would beat a cat." This sally made us laugh till we cried again.

M. Treneuil succeeded, in spite of his me-

diocritty, because he had admirable perseverance in solicitation. The Dauphiness conferred on him a magnificent reward, for the verses which he wrote upon her and her august family. I have omitted to say that, during the revolution, M. de Treneuil married the Countess de Castellane, who had been divorced from her husband; and that, when the countess died at Toulouse, he had a good mind to interfere as husband, though he had agreed to her return to the count; but the offer of a round sum induced him to preserve his conjugal incognito.

At the time when Messrs. Barruel, de Fontvieille, and Treneuil, were prowling about me to obtain my patronage with his majesty, one of the most celebrated personages of our sex, strove to come at the king without my intercession: this was the Countess de Genlis. She had not then published her Memoirs, which appear from time to time, like a continuation of her novels. Madame de Genlis, after loving the revolution and the emperor, had taken it into her head that she could love the king too, and above all that she could be necessary to him. One day I went in to his majesty, just as he had finished reading a letter.

“ Do you know who has been writing to me ? ” asked Louis XVIII.

“ No, Sire.”

“A lady-author, who gives me advice.”

“There are but two capable of that folly ; the Baroness de Stael and the Countess de Genlis. I see by the hand-writing, that the letter is not from the first ; it must therefore be the second, who has set herself up for your adviser.”

“Be easy,” replied the king ; “she intimates that she was in literary correspondence with Bonaparte ; and that the information which she gave him on many points was highly advantageous to the State. She proposes to proceed on the same footing with me, being persuaded that what was good for the one must be excellent for the other. I am not of her opinion, and I shall beg some one of her intimate friends to request her to spare herself the trouble of correspondence. I would not, however deprecate her talents, which are extensive in literature ; but, in politics, if Madame de Stael is too much of a man, the other is too much of a woman.”

I suffered his majesty to go on as long as he pleased. I had no commission from Madame de Genlis to defend her ; besides, for my part, I could not pardon her vain jealousy of Madame de Stael.

Let us now turn to more important personages. No time was lost in organising the life-guards ;

there were to be six companies, four of which were to be given to men of the old *régime*; namely, the Dukes of Havré and Croÿ, de Grammont, de Luxembourg, and the Prince de Poix, and the two others to new men, who were the Prince of Wagram, and the Duke of Ragusa. This arrangement had been made in order to satisfy every body. The ancient uniform, which was a complete livery, could not well be revived: in particular it was deemed expedient to suppress the red small-clothes and the gold laced hat. Accordingly, when one of the guards in the new uniform was presented to *Madame royale*, she said: "I should not know that these were life-guards; they are not like the guards of our house, but still they may be excellent soldiers."

The first company that was ready, or at least the first that did duty, was under the command of the Prince de Poix, and the manner of its debut deserves a little separate article.

The young guards, from their first formation, imitated the supreme disdain of the old soldiers for the national guard. They did not like *pékins* to be on duty with them about the king. In consequence, on the 25th June 1814, at noon, the company of the guards, commanded by the Prince de Poix, seized the posts of the palace occupied by the national guard, took from the

guard-house the things belonging to the citizens, and, adding railing to insult, threw them—the things I mean, not the citizens—out of doors. This mode of taking possession was rather inconvenient. The just complaints of the national guard, and its energetic remonstrances, which might pass for threats, alarmed the Prince de Poix, who offered voluntarily to make reparation for the offence. Orders of the day flattering to the national guard were therefore issued, visits were paid to the insulted, and dinners given—in short all possible amends were made.

The court, on this occasion was divided into two parties. The new houses were in favour of the national guard, the old sided with the life-guards. The Prince de Poix having thought fit to say, that he would teach France to respect the latter, Marshal Suchet replied with warmth: “ France will respect them, when she sees them return mutilated from the field of battle. Till then she will consider them but as boys serving their apprenticeship to war.” The frankness of this speech was not universally relished, as it may be easily conceived. Accordingly, when the king took the portfolio of war from General Dupont, he durst not give it to Marshal Suchet, but transferred it to the Duke of Dalmatia, who, suddenly touched with grace, reconciled himself with the mass and the monarchy by causing

an expiatory monument to be erected in honour of the victims of Quiberon.

From the moment of the quarrel just related the national guard was received at the palace less favourably than before. It is not true, as it has been asserted, that a prince never designated it before his intimate friends otherwise than *those gentry of 1789*; but a nobleman of the court, M. de F.... had the hardihood to say; “ If the national guard presumes to stir, I will undertake to bring it to reason with two regiments of Cossacks.”

The king was exceedingly vexed at this opposition and these gasconades. He observed too that people sometimes spoke too slightly of the old army, and regretted that he had too soon disbanded the imperial guard. He knew that courage and talent were united in this ancient army, while his faithful servants also had bravery—for bravery is natural to Frenchmen,—but were deficient in military science; and that, if the court had been obliged to find generals on the spur of the occasion, the court could not have made any good ones. But the ultras were the more imprudent in their disdain, because the army had readily leagued itself with them against the charter, the object of their petty dislike. I have already made mention of a protest that was presented against it. Some person was not afraid to lay this insolent paper upon the king’s

bureau in his private cabinet. Incensed at this, Louis XVIII sent for the principal persons by whom it was signed and severely reprimanded them. One of these gentlemen had the audacity to reply, that it was he who was ruining the monarchy, and that, after all, if he thus renounced his rights, those who succeeded him would take measures for recovering theirs. I give but an outline of this scene. All the details of it will be found among my papers after my death.

Of all the discontented, those who were at the least pains to conceal their dissatisfaction were the clergy; their conduct was indeed too bad. During the reign of Napoleon they had behaved peaceably and submissively, and they had found means, though the times rendered it difficult, to gain the confidence and the friendship of their flocks. They did not intrigue; they were content to do good, and in the villages especially, they obtained the more power, the less they seemed to desire it. But, immediately after the return of the king, their pretensions, which had slumbered, awoke. From their new demands, you would have supposed that the restoration had been effected for their exclusive benefit. They were not aware of all that there was agreeable in their situation in regard to their flocks. The demon of domination took possession of them. Louis XVIII deplored this avidity of the

clergy; he was angry with those who encouraged it, and at the head of whom was a duke and peer, the presumed author of the famous petition of which I have spoken.

This duke is not, for certain, the Duke de Maillé, a gentleman of the bed-chamber, who is much fonder of the opera than of the church, and who descants on the *entrechats* and the *pirouettes* of the young ladies belonging to the former, with the supreme *ton* of a gentleman of the old school.

A man of far superior gravity was the aged Monsieur de Balainvilliers, who became chancellor and keeper of the seals to Monsieur. He was the official representative of the ancient council of state. He had no love for liberty. It was his notion that people ought to serve the king blindly, as they serve God, and that the commands of the one are not less sacred than those of the other. I have no hesitation to assert that he believed in the infallibility of the king. He was indignant at the independence with which the speakers expressed themselves at the tribune and the advocates at the bar; and he could have wished these audacious orators to be silenced with *lettres de cachet*. After all, this poor man was well paid for disliking the revolution. He had, at his departure, left his only daughter under the guardianship of his steward. During the

reign of terror, the latter had forced the young lady to marry his son, and she had died broken-hearted on account of this marriage. Hence proceeded the aversion which M. de Balanviliers had conceived for the new order of things. One may well forgive absurdities which originate in parental affection.

CHAPTER XIX.

Louis XVIII and the King of Prussia.—M. de Latrène.—Deputation of the Floral Games.—The king's journey in 1777.—Bordeaux—Toulouse.—The Gascons—Carcassonne.—School of Sorreze.—Narbonne.—Beziers.—Montpellier.—Nimes.—Marseilles.—Aix.—The Southerns.—Bordeaux on the 12th of March.—Deputation to Hartwell.—M. de Tauzia.—First notion of a Duchy at Bordeaux.

THE allied sovereigns did nothing but go and come from England to Holland, and from Holland to Paris. Their presence did not amuse the king: he dreaded counsels which appeared to him to assail the dignity of his power. But the person whom he most shunned was the King of Prussia. On one occasion, when that monarch told ours that he expected that his French majesty would not keep for six months that charter, with which he had no more power than a bur-

gomaster : " Sir, my brother," replied Louis XVIII, " I hope to keep it as long as I live; with it my power is increased by all that which I relinquish to my subjects; whereas I am much afraid of seeing yours clipped to-day or to-morrow by messieurs the students in your universities."

This answer of the king's was an imprudence, and he had reason to repent it. In fact, the Prussian monarch was led to reflect that, by the mere promise given to the people to allow it a share in the blessings of a wise liberty, Louis XVIII would be enabled to humble all the kings in Europe. Then commenced official notes, insinuations, secret intrigues. They even strove to frighten the king; he was threatened with open war, and it was in pursuance of this threat that the troops, which happened so fortunately to be cantoned on the frontiers of the kingdom at the time of Napoleon's return, were not withdrawn. I must say that the foreigners were powerfully seconded in the interior of the palace. It is the less painful to me to admit this, since constitutional ideas have by degrees become better understood at court.

The king was no stranger to all that passed, and this threw him into fits of melancholy which we had difficulty to dispel. One day, when he was in low spirits as usual, he was amazingly

cheered by a deputation from the Academy of Floral Games. The president of that deputation was the Marquis de Latrène, formerly attorney-general to the parliament of Toulouse, a clever man, better suited to the Academy than the law. He wrote with great elegance and facility ; when I say *wrote*, I mean *writes*, for I sincerely hope that he is not dead, though it is a long time since I have had the pleasure of seeing him.

This audience caused the king to recollect a period that he was fond of calling to mind, that of his tour in the south of France in 1777. "I was then young," said he to me, "the ladies said that I was handsome, and every body thought me amiable ; now, age, vexations—but stay, madam, let us talk of my tour in 1777. I passed expeditiously through the provinces nearest to Paris. They have no peculiar physiognomy ; their vicinity to the capital has taken from them their originality. At Bordeaux I met with the national character in its primitive purity. The Gascons are always vain, clever, impetuous, brave ; if they are fond of money, they know how to get it. Bordeaux is a remarkable city, and its bar is indisputably the first in France*. I visited Toulouse, the inha-

* This might be true at the time when Messrs. Ravez and Lainé shone at the bar of that city.

bitants of which resemble in so many respects their neighbours, the Spaniards. They are grave, indolent, and eager after nobility; they would be fond of wealth and reputation, if they were not obliged to labour and take trouble to acquire them. At Carcassonne I found activity personified; the inhabitants of that town have considerable natural talent, but they are waiting to get rich before they display it. I turned out of my way to visit the School of Sorreze. I was curious to see how the young folks dispatched their dinner. While I was in the refectory, young Bonneval, as clever as his great-uncle, the pacha of three tails, said to me: 'Monseigneur, at Versailles people go to see princes dine, and at Sorreze princes do us the honour to look on while we are dining.' I was pleased with this sally. I recollect nothing of Narbonne but that it is a mean town: of Beziers, on the contrary, I have always thought with pleasure. Montpellier has charming promenades and *grisettes* quite as charming. Nimes is a Roman town, inhabited by a people of the middle ages. Aix is a city of parliamentary nobles, where they talked to me about nothing but the good King René. As for Marseilles, I there saw magnificent black eyes. Its inhabitants, like their ancestors, the Phoceans, are certainly fond of

commerce and distant voyages, but they love their country and my family."

The king took delight that day in praising the southerns. " Bonaparte", said he " found them rather too frank in his last journey; and they are hot-headed and cannot very easily reconcile themselves to my charter. There ought to have been, for their amusement, some little hanging-about; but I hope they will become quiet, and I have good reason to be pleased with the spontaneousness of their royalism. Marseilles and Bordeaux are two perfect cities; I shall not be told that it is the nobility who form the public opinion in those two cities; who are the nobility of Marseilles, and Bordeaux?" His majesty also mentioned to me the pleasure which he received from the mission of the Bordeaux deputation to Hartwell, to acquaint him with the events of the 12th of March. " You had already come," said Louis XVIII to me, " like the dove of the ark, to bring me the first olive-branch: M. de Tauzia* came to confirm your happy presage. We saw him arrive in a carriage, the postillion and horses to which were

* M. de Tauzia was assistant to Count Lynch, and voluntarily offered himself for this still dangerous mission. He left Bordeaux the 14th of March and arrived at Hartwell on the 25th.

decorated with large white cockades : it was the day of the *Annunciation*, as Madame Royale remarked. How often did we make this happy envoy repeat the account of my nephew's entry into Bordeaux ! The negotiations of Chatillon were still threatening us ; but we had at length got a footing in France. ' Well,' said I, at night, to Blacas, ' Bonaparte perhaps did wrong to reject at the time the offers which I made him.' He replied, that I could not return to my kingdom but over a hundred thousand carcasses, and other things of the kind : how will he get over that now ? ' Faith that's his business ; every one in his turn !—Blacas rubbed his eyes, as if to tell me that he imagined himself to be awaking from a dream ; and I, in my sleep, which was but short that night, talked aloud and cried *Vive le Roi ! Vive Bordeaux !* Next day I wrote a fine letter to the city of the 12th of March. If my niece gives me a great-nephew I will call him Duke of Bordeaux."

Alas ! Madame d'Angoulême has not fulfilled this wish, but the Duchess of Berry has happily afforded the king occasion to reward the signal attachment of the principal city of the South.

CHAPTER XX.

Portrait of M. de Chateaubriand.—His conversation.—His style
—His person.—His stature.—Praise of hump-backs.—Dogs.
—Cats.—The ass.—The horse.—Liberals and *ultras* of natural history.—M. de Chateaubriand ambassador to Sweden.—Bernadotte.—The Duke of Rovigo at the author's.—Cambaceres.—Carnot.—The author writes to him.—His answer and interview with the King.—His Memorial.

I promised a portrait of M. de Chateaubriand—here it is. I have already proclaimed M. de Chateaubriand the intellectual hero of the royalist party : he is also my especial hero, and if I could fancy that I felt in my heart a few drops of that blood which throbbed in Madame de Staël's when she wrote her *Letters on Jean Jacques Rousseau*, I would like her devote a whole volume to the author to whom I am indebted for my most delicious emotions. In M. de Chateaubriand I love even his very defects, because they constitute part of his originality, because they are his own, and because they are not proofs of impotence, but rather of excess of energy : in fact, what he is reproached with, is exaggeration, and I belong to my sex, which is far from hating exaggeration. His conversation is not brilliant : he *improvises* in the closet only ; before more than one witness he

is obliged to *read*; but when alone with a secretary, the practised pen of the latter cannot keep up with the rapid abundance of the words which he dictates. There is a tinge of melancholy, or rather of sublime sadness, in his talent: adversity has inspired his most splendid pages, and solitude causes him to see men in a poetic perspective only: it is there that he finds those expressions sonorous as the horn of Roland at Roncesvalles, and capable of rousing all the chivalry of history from its sepulchres. In conversation he is timid, uneasy, almost bashful, for he is aware that he has not in his favour the beauty of forms; his written language and his heart are all that he has about him truly chivalrous. His person is almost mean; his shoulders are rather unequal; but this I had never observed, having always viewed him through the beauty of his style, till I read that singular praise of hump-backs, which he has introduced into his *Life of the Duke of Berry*, where he tells us that the prince was “rather round-shouldered, as has been the case with *all the great military races*:” but, pen in hand, M. de Chateaubriand is ten cubits high, like Homer’s Titans, and handsome as the Paladins. God forbid that I should offend, by this comparison, either Duguesclin or the Marshal de Luxembourg, his two favourite warriors. Opposition is particularly favourable to the genius of

M. de Chateaubriand : it throws it out in relief. Favour, on the contrary *tires* him, and he sincerely rejoiced in the bottom of his heart at every one of his disgraces. It is in general in a hostile part that he has made most noise, in all the great epochs of his life : a *philosopher* under the old *régime* ; an *armed emigrant* under the republic ; a *religious writer* under the directory ; resigning his post as diplomatic agent under the consulate when the Duke d'Enghien was murdered ; daring singly to asperse the empire in the *Mercure de France*, in an article on Tiberius ; converting into a political criticism the compulsory *éloge* delivered before the Academy ; the champion of royalism against the re-actions of M. Decazes ; an enemy to the censorship even while minister—M. de Chateaubriand has had the honour of being hateful to all mediocrities.

All his domestic partialities betray also this warlike disposition. He has censured Buffon for having omitted in his Natural History the dog of the blind man : but he is not fond of dogs in general, and gives the preference to cats, of which his house is always full. “The dog,” says he, “is a slave which basely submits to all the caprices of his master, and licks the hand that beats him : the cat knows how to avenge herself, the cat knows how to be free,” alluding, no doubt, to the excursions of the latter upon our

house-tops. In like manner he places the ass before the horse. "The horse," says he, "is a thoughtless beast; the ass reasons. Homer has compared Ajax to an ass and not to a horse; and it is an ass on which the Bible confers speech. The ass is obstinate: when he has chosen a way, neither threats, nor bridle, nor whip, can divert him from it; on he goes, because he is resolved to go, and at his own pace." In short, according to M. de Chateaubriand, the ass and the cat are liberals, the dog and the horse genuine ultras; for at the bottom of all M. de Chateaubriand's opinions there is that generous and enlightened liberalism which, thanks to Louis XVIII and his charter, agrees perfectly well with the worship of monarchy.

Part of the nobility, enraptured with the talents of M. de Chateaubriand and with the services which he had rendered, were for calling him to the helm of the state: but, on the other hand, a vigorous opposition kept the noble viscount aloof from it. Louis XVIII scarcely liked him, and yet that public opinion which reigns paramount loudly insisted that something should be done for M. de Chateaubriand, and it would have been almost ungrateful not to do something. It was therefore determined to appoint him at once ambassador to Sweden.

M. de Chateaubriand was struck with this

nomination, which was quite unexpected. He hoped for something else. Besides, there were elements of discord in Sweden, which rendered this embassy far from agreeable. The king was the same Charles XIII, who had dethroned his nephew and usurped the crown, not to transmit it to his children or to preserve it for them, for he had none, but to bequeath it to a foreigner, a fortunate soldier, who had succeeded, without intrigue and without fighting, by his reputation alone, in exalting himself to a place among kings.

In an age in which we have witnessed so many extraordinary vicissitudes, the good fortune of General Bernadotte is remarkable. An able captain, indulgent to the vanquished, he might have been but the first subject of Napoleon; a nation voluntarily nominated him its sovereign: never was greater homage paid to talents and courage. The sovereigns of Europe in general were not pleased to have a commoner for their colleague, but Louis XVIII, who had a high opinion of the King of Sweden, said to me, in speaking of him: "That is the sort of wood which is wanted for founding a dynasty."

M. de Chateaubriand had too much penetration not to perceive that he was appointed ambassador by means of a court intrigue. He was not the dupe of this honour. He solicited an audience of the king. It would have been difficult,

nay impossible, to refuse it: still Louis XVIII, who was aware that he had done wrong, was afraid to meet M. de Chateaubriand face to face. He acquainted me with his embarrassment. "You would do me a great kindness," said he, "if you would give M. de Chateaubriand to understand that it is impossible for me to do more for him just now. I have many faithful servants to reward, and his fidelity is already in part rewarded."

I told the king that I knew nothing of diplomatic affairs, and that it would be well to send his grand-master of the wardrobe on this errand. Louis XVIII saw that he could not entrust so delicate a commission to M. de Blacas, and chose rather to grant the audience solicited. This conference led to no result whatever. M. de Chateaubriand did not refuse the appointment, and yet he made no preparations to set out for Stockholm.

About this time I was not a little surprised to receive a call from the Duke of Rovigo, whom I thought far enough off with his master to whom he appeared to be so tenderly attached. The Duke of Rovigo had kept out of the way since the restoration, because he well knew that he had drawn upon himself the hatred of all the French, by rendering the unjust measures of the emperor still more unjust by the manner in which

he executed them. Had he shewn himself at the first moment, he would probably have been served an ill turn: for my part, I bore him no grudge whatever. A few months before, he had done me a service which I could not forget; besides, I knew him thoroughly, and was aware that most of his faults proceeded from mistaken enthusiasm for Napoleon. As soon as I set eyes on him, "Good God," said I, with the bantering familiarity of an old acquaintance, "where do you spring from? It is an age since I have seen you."

"I come," said he, forcing a smile, "to strive to make my peace."

"That will be very difficult," said I; "you are not here in the odour of sanctity. You have been painted as black as a coal."

"Yes," said he, "my letter to Madame de Staël, and then a great crime which is attributed to me! But I am innocent of it, and you see that, to avoid suspicion, I am now behaving with prudence."

"For that reason too, you let Bonaparte set out without seeing him?"

"Certainly."

"Oh! Monsieur le Duc, that was very wrong of you—a man too that you loved so dearly!"

"Yes, I loved, and I still love him: but he has done so many foolish things! He could not be

content with the first throne in the world, around which we should have raised a rampart of our fidelity."

At the concluding word, I could no longer restrain my laughter. "Yes, yes," I replied, "a pretty sort of fidelity! But what would you have with me to-day?"

"I am told that you are frequently at the palace: I wish you to speak to the king for me; if he would consent to employ me, I might be of the greatest service to the police."

"Monsieur le Duc," answered I, "the best thing you can do, is to be quiet, and to let people forget you. I would not advise you to knock at the doors of the palace; they are shut against you for ever."

There finished our conversation. The Duke of Rovigo did not take the good advice which I had given him. Tired of inactivity, he solicited employment of the new court, but the new court would not give him any. For this reason he returned to the old one, and figured among the faithful of the 20th of March 1815. Though I made no promise, I spoke to the king about him; but Louis XVIII was strongly prejudiced against my client; he reckoned up on his fingers the odious acts of the minister of the imperial police. He reminded me of the murder of the Duke d'Enghien, and that of young Vitel, nephew of

Fauche Borel, and of the attempts which had been made for alluring the Duke of Berry to France, for the purpose of treating him like the others, and a thousand things which alienated him for ever from the Duke of Rovigo. I thought that it would not be prudent to persist, and I purposed to await a better opportunity of serving this unfortunate friend.

There was another great man of the empire who sought to reconcile himself with the monarchy: this was M. de Cambaceres, who desired nothing less than a ministry. The king had made him an offer of the presidency of a court—that of cassation or of accounts. I know not the motive which induced M. de Cambaceres to refuse it.

The king frequently lamented that political considerations did not permit him to employ men whose talents would have been serviceable to him. There was one in particular whom he thought at one time of securing; but this man harassed on all sides by the royalists, published at the moment a work against the monarchy—a work which rendered all reconciliation between it and him impossible. The reader will guess that I allude to Carnot.

This extraordinary man, after partaking in all the crimes of the committee of public welfare, had been fortunate enough to be considered in-

nocent of them by his fellow citizens. His private character caused his political one to be overlooked. It was impossible to refuse him a certain esteem: the very children of the numerous victims whom he had sent to the scaffold regarded him with not less respect than horror. A man may then be disinterested, and of mild and pleasing manners, and yet feel no abhorrence of spilling blood. Behold the point to which a sophistical love of liberty and country may lead! Carnot was at once impetuous and discreet, and rash without ceasing to be prudent: he was at once a mathematician and a poet, a man of counsel and a man of the sword. His supple and vigorous imagination could bend itself to every thing, could embrace every thing. In his person you would recognize the man whom I have described; his face was plain, but full of austerity and genius; nevertheless Bonaparte, who knew him well, thought him fit only to *administer* and not to *govern*.

Shortly after his arrival, the king spoke to me concerning M. Carnot. "Do you know him?" said he:

"Yes, Sire, I made his acquaintance in a singular manner. He came sometimes to my cousin de L.....'s. I was there one evening, when M. Carnot was announced. At this name I expected to see one of those old furious and filthy

jacobins. I was not a little surprised to see a man with a calm and austere look, and dressed very neatly though simply. Never could I have figured to myself this terrible conventionalist with such a face and in such a costume."

"He is a man of great talents," rejoined Louis XVIII, "and an administrator of his ability would be much better qualified for the ministry of war than my friend Dupont." We laughed for a moment, and the king continued: I should be glad if I could employ him."

"What, Sire!" I exclaimed, "a regicide?"

"No, I must not; there is between him and me an impassable gulf—a gulf of blood; nevertheless, if the welfare of France required it, I would make a sacrifice of my recollections and of my dearest sentiments. But I am afraid of opposition."

"Indeed, Sire," I replied, "it would be a strange scandal to see a murderer of Louis XVI in your council."

"That is just the way with you all," replied the king. "But be not alarmed; a regicide shall never be minister while I reign, I promise you." And yet a year had not elapsed before Louis XVIII broke this promise in favour of Fouché!

The king said to me: "I should like to talk

with M. Carnot; will you take the trouble to let him know this?"

"Your wishes are commands with me."

"I should like the matter to be kept secret as much as possible. Write to him; tell him that I wish to see him, and if he consents to come, we will contrive with Père Elisée so that nobody in the palace shall know any thing about it."

The same evening I wrote the following note to M. Carnot:

"Does M. Carnot recollect me? if he has not forgotten me I shall solicit of his gallantry a favour which I hope will not be refused me. I request him to meet me to-morrow morning at nine o'clock, in the bronze pavilion, in the Jardin des Plantes. I have a message for him from a powerful personage in France, who has the strongest desire to see him. If M. Carnot should not be at liberty to-morrow morning, I would beg him to appoint any other time; I am quite at his command."

I waited with impatience for M. Carnot's answer; but I had not to wait long. In about an hour I received the following note from him:

“ No, madam, I have not forgotten you: any one who has had the happiness to see and hear you can never forget the charms of your mind or person. Thirty years ago, a secret interview such as you have the kindness to propose would have filled my heart with the most delicious hopes; but now, the time of illusions is past. Notwithstanding the obscurity of your note, I can guess the person of whom you want to speak to me: but why that person should wish to see me—what he can have to say to me—I cannot conceive. I shall nevertheless attend you punctually at the place which you have appointed. I could have wished, madam, to see you again solely for the purpose of assuring you of the tender and respectful admiration with which I am, &c. &c.”

I was surprised at so much gallantry on the part of M. Carnot. I knew at the same time that this stern republican was likewise a sentimental poet, in the style of M. Dorat, or the Chevalier de Cubieres. Before the revolution he contributed light poems to the Almanach des Muses. During the terror, when he was engaged ten hours a day at the committee of public welfare, and prepared, unassisted, plans of campaign for the fourteen armies of the republic, he

composed songs and elegies by way of relaxation. I recollect to have even seen a volume of poems which he had printed about that period.

Next morning at the hour mentioned, I found M. Carnot at the place appointed for the interview. I thanked him for his punctuality. "Madam," replied he, "you may infer from that circumstance the pleasure which I have in meeting you again." He was proceeding in the same strain, but I interrupted him without ceremony, and began to talk of the important business which had brought us together. The kindness of his looks was instantly dispelled; the smile expired upon his lips, his face assumed an austere and thoughtful expression. He listened to me with the greatest attention and the most profound silence: his piercing eyes were fixed upon me, and he seemed to be absorbed in his reflexions. Strange thoughts must no doubt have crowded upon the mind of the republican regicide, at the moment when his services were solicited on behalf of the king, of a Bourbon, of the brother of Louis XVI.

"Madam," said he, "the royal family and I have nothing to do with one another: for what purpose should I go to the palace? I should be considered there either as a culprit coming to solicit pardon, or as a converted republican applying for places and pensions; neither of

these characters befits me. My political life is finished: let me be suffered to pass the rest of my days in obscurity and peace. I have devoted my life," added he, in a melancholy tone, " to a lost cause: as for what I have done in support of it, I owe an account of that to God alone."

" General," I replied, " let us forget the horrors of the past, and think only of the future, which it depends upon us to render more happy. Louis XVIII is animated by the best intentions, but his situation is difficult: between encroaching allies and indiscreet friends, surrounded by faithful servants destitute of capacity and able men of suspected fidelity, he has thought that he should find in you an enlightened and upright counsellor. If you love your country, you will not refuse to give the monarch advice which may be serviceable to him and to France.

" No, I will not refuse," replied he, with vivacity; " but I doubt whether any good will result from it. The idiots and the traitors who see the king at all hours will efface the impressions which I shall have produced upon his mind in one or two audiences; and then, how could I agree with Louis XVIII? he is a royalist, that is his trade; while I am republican. In the transactions that may take place between royalty and liberty, he would be for relinquishing as little as possible of the rights of royalty, and I should

be anxious that liberty should obtain solid advantages and above all good guarantees. I must confess that the concessions which he has already made have surpassed my hopes, and since this poor country cannot have a free government, these concessions may perhaps be sufficient for it, if they are honestly executed."

" I am glad to see that you do justice to the king and to the desire which he feels to do what is right."

" Yes," replied M. Carnot, with a sarcastic smile, " he wishes to do what is right, because at this moment there is no doing wrong with impunity."

" General, you poison the purest intentions : the republicans are not more charitable towards their neighbours than religious bigots."

" Madam, I do not speak lightly of the king. I read, a long time since, a correspondence with the Count de Provence, which is in the hands of one of my friends, and I think that I am thoroughly acquainted with the sentiments and character of this prince. Nevertheless, I will not have any thing to reproach myself with ; you may tell the king that I will wait upon him any day that he will appoint. Tell him too that I will deliver to him a memorial, in which I shall justify my past conduct to him, and give my ideas on the present state of affairs."

“ Then, Sir, I may assure his majesty of your obedience?”

“ Tell the king,” answered he drily, “ that I will go to see him, whenever he invites me to do so.”

Thus terminated our political conference. M. Carnot immediately resumed all his gallantry: he offered me his arm which I accepted, and he accompanied me to the Pont St. Michel. As soon as I had reached home, I wrote to the king to acquaint him with the success of my negotiation. His majesty, whom I saw in the evening, condescended to express his satisfaction on the subject.

“ Well!” said he, to me, “ what think you of this haughty Roman?”

“ I think, Sire, that he has one fault, not at all common at the present day, that of adhering with invincible obstinacy to his old opinions.”

A few days afterwards M. Carnot had his first audience of the king; it took place very early in the morning and lasted two hours. During this long conversation, the interlocutors could scarcely ever agree. M. Carnot warmly urged the king to make concessions which he could not grant without degrading the royal majesty in his person. At the conclusion of the audience, “ Sire,” said M. Carnot, “ I regret, for the happiness of France, that my counsels are not ap-

proved by you ; be this as it will, if foreigners ever declare war against you, you may rely upon me. I shall be ready to serve you either as general, or lieutenant, or even as a private soldier : all political differences are forgotten, when we are called upon to defend the national independence. He then delivered to the king his famous Memorial, requesting him to read it. The king accordingly perused it ; but he was so fearful that this Memorial would produce extraordinary irritation, that he desired me a second time to request M. Carnot to wait upon him, and to urge him strenuously to forego his intention of publishing his work. M. Carnot committed the capital fault of promising to comply, when its suppression no longer depended upon himself. He had sold the work to a bookseller ; a great number of copies were actually printed ; and it would have availed the author nothing to withdraw his manuscript. This famous Memorial therefore appeared two days afterwards, and occasioned a dreadful scandal. The king was incensed at the conduct of M. Carnot, and never forgave him. It was M. de Chateaubriand who took up the gauntlet of the regicide champion. His pamphlet expressed the very sentiments of the king, who sent to compliment him upon it : this was perhaps not so much as he ought to have done.

CHAPTER XXI.

M. Beugnot.—Gothic costume of the Cent-Suisses.—Sayings of Louis XVIII.—M. Damolard.—M. Bedoc.—M. Durbach.—Dinners at the palace.—Madame Ripert and her company.—M. Fievée.—Messrs. Missonnier and Pigeon.—Count de Boutet.—M. Valmalette.—M. Cortois de Pressigny, formerly bishop of St. Malo.—Maubreuil's affair.—What the king said to the author on that subject.—The Duchess-dowager of Orleans.

WHILE the audacious apology of the regicide was selling publicly at Paris, M. Beugnot, prefect of police, issued an ordinance which threw the whole city into an uproar. A treaty of peace ceding half of France to the foreigners would not have produced such a ferment in Paris. You should have heard the tradesmen of the rue St. Denis complaining, that for thirty years an act of such odious tyranny had not been witnessed in France. They, who had so patiently endured the imperial despotism, were ready to revolt rather than to shut their shops on Sundays.

M. Beugnot was grieved at the ill success of his ordinance. He is a man of considerable ability, but throughout his whole political career, as on this occasion, he has always lost himself

by attempting to effect too much. With unequal suppleness and dexterity, extraordinary sagacity, astonishing aptitude for business, and great administrative experience, he might have acted an important part; but he has taken so much pains to attain the highest posts, that he has missed all. These unsuccessful efforts have not discouraged his ambition; he is still sighing for a portfolio which he never will obtain. It is said, that during the ministry of Decazes, he was created a peer, and that he has the ordinance of his nomination in his pocket, but for the last nine years he has been the Tantalus of the peerdom.

The ordinance of M. Beugnot had irritated the Parisians; the gothic costume of the cent-suisses, who were made to resume the dress which they had worn prior to the revolution, excited their laughter, which was but little better. One day when I was repeating to the king the endless jokes played off upon these poor Suisses, he said to me: "Is it my fault, if they will give the Parisians cause for laughter? There are people here, who would like to have every thing restored which they saw in their youth. I cannot make them comprehend that what was well enough then is not so now. The public laughs at our expense, but indeed, matters would go on much worse, if I were not to curb the extravagance of these gentlemen, and if, as they say, I were not to act somewhat of the revolutionist."

Meanwhile the chamber of deputies was about to assemble. The king, on his return to France, had convoked that chamber as it existed at the moment when it was cashiered by Bonaparte, in December 1813. This was a highly politic measure. The former legislators delighted to find themselves restored to political life by the royal government, manifested the strongest attachment to its interests. Some of them, however, wished to make a noise, and to indemnify themselves for the silence to which they had been doomed by the imperial despotism: at their head was M. Dumolard, formerly attorney-general to the parliament of Grenoble, and member of all the legislative assemblies since the commencement of the revolution. He was a frothy declaimer, who uttered in a vehement tone the most common-place things. He was never less than two hours at the tribune, and he generally wound up his speech with an apostrophe to France or an invocation to liberty. The *patriotery* of M. Dumolard produced the strongest sensation upon the public; accordingly, in our counter-revolutionary exaggeration, we did him the honour to consider him as a furious jacobin. He was, at bottom, a very excellent man, who deserved neither the admiration of the public nor the hatred of the court.

M. Bedoc, formerly imperial attorney in the criminal court of La Correze, possessed more

real talent. He spoke with clearness and precision. He had enlightened views, a sound understanding, and an independent character: yet we liked him little better than M. Dumolard, with whom he coincided in his opinions.

We were also greatly irritated against M. Durbach, who pleaded, like the two others, for the liberty of the press and liberal principles: yet we could not help acknowledging that he was an elegant, clear, and methodical speaker: he rarely appeared at the tribune, but when he did ascend to it, his calm and moderate eloquence produced a strong impression upon the chamber. Louis XVIII was alarmed at all these discussions, or rather at the ferment which they excited in people's minds. It was incessantly shouted in his ears, that the revolution began with speeches and terminated in the overthrow of the monarchy. There were not wanting at the palace persons who availed themselves of the king's uneasiness, to wrest from him measures directly contrary to the spirit of the charter and his own royal intentions. They were continually repeating that this charter was only a temporary concession, a transaction between royalty and the revolution, both of which were again struggling into existence, and that, when once the throne should be re-established on a solid foundation, it would be necessary either to modify the

principal articles of that contract or to abolish it altogether. Thus commenced those imprudent counsels and those baneful measures, which were to hurry us so rapidly into the terrible catastrophe of the 20th of March.

How far were we from foreseeing such an event ! A sort of giddiness had seized us royalists, and we hastened with inconceivable levity towards a counter-revolution. The women, in particular, distinguished themselves by their continual extravagance. Some of them, it is true, meant to atone for the irregularity of their past conduct by the vehemence of their love for the ancient dynasty ; others turned pure royalists out of speculation. The countess de B.... pretended to pay her creditors with *Vive le Roi !* the Marquise de R.... de M.... sold at a high rate to applicants thronging from the country that influence which she did not possess. The Tuilleries was frequently besieged, as it were, by female intriguers of this kind.

All the people belonging to the palace kept open table. They feasted at the king's expense, in the apartments, in the ante-chambers, and even in the corridors ; this they called supporting unfortunate loyalty, and in fact they were supporting adventurers, men of business, song-writers always in appetite, pamphleteers at so much per sheet, and parasites who adored royalty in power,

but who on the 20th of March betrayed royalty in adversity.

One of the houses most frequented by royalist good company was at that time Madame Ripert's. I cannot give an adequate idea of the character of that extraordinary woman : enthusiastic, fickle, capricious, she passed in a moment from joy to sorrow, from courage to fear, from coolness to rage. What she had loved with transport one day she could not endure on the morrow. She was mad for the Bourbons, but, from a spirit of contradiction, she had turned constitutionalist. She was forgiven for this little freak in consideration of the services which she had rendered to the good cause. During the directory and the empire, she had supported the courage of her husband, M. Ripert, and of M. Michaud, who were joint editors of the *Quotidienne*, and who, whenever the press was free, generously defended the legitimacy of the monarchy in that paper. In 1814, she was still the soul of that excellent journal, which, at that period, became the organ of the purest and most exalted royalist opinion.

M. Fievée was the ornament of Madame Ripert's parties, by the *piquant* humour of his conversation, by the delicacy and grace of his wit, and by the amiableness of his disposition. He was already known for his royalist sentiments and his talents as a writer. He has since waged

a very brisk war of the pen against all the successive ministers since the restoration ; and he has shewn that he is capable of reasoning with vigour, as well as narrating with perspicuity, and satirizing with severity. M. Fievée possesses very extensive attainments, and admirable sagacity for appreciating men and things ; and he would have filled with distinction an eminent place in the administration or in the diplomatic line. He has always been left aside, I know not why ; but the court now thinks itself justified by the check which M. Fievée experienced, when he aspired to a seat in the chamber of deputies. The *bon-mots* of his vanity already constituted part of the drawing-room *anecdotes*.

I met also at Madame Ripert's two very distinguished young men who wrote for the *Quotidienne*. The first, M. Missonnier, had abundance of good sense, taste, and judgment : he was a hearty royalist, but he was thought to be too moderate. The second, M. Pigeon, had all the vivacity of a Provençal ; he was ardent in his opinions, intolerant towards those of others, personally amiable and mild, but always in a fury when he had the pen in his hand. He wrote pamphlets sparkling with wit, satire, and humour —pamphlets which to us appeared admirable and made for immortality, but of which I should now be exceedingly puzzled to tell the titles.

I shall mention also, among the persons whom I met with pleasure at Madame Ripert's, old General Anselme, who was a staunch royalist, but whose brother was not; Count du Boutet, a very amiable officer, who united elegant and polished manners with the vivacity of Languedec; and lastly, M. de Valmalette, the La Fontaine of the restoration, who hoped to ensure the triumph of legitimacy by composing poetical fables.

The ante-chambers of the Tuileries were, as I have said, so beset by intriguers, that many royalists, disliking to mingle with this crowd, kept aloof and would not come to the palace. The consequence was, that the king knew very few of his ablest and most faithful servants, and that he conferred important posts on persons utterly incapable. His majesty nevertheless conceived the happy idea of selecting M. Cortois de Pressigny, formerly bishop of St. Malo, for his ambassador to Rome. This prelate, a clever man, of a very acute and subtle mind, possessed great talents for diplomacy, which he had never had an opportunity of displaying. In 1801, he was one of the very small number of French bishops, who, in obedience to the command, of his Holiness, resigned their episcopal functions. This sacrifice was destined at a later period to procure him the signal honour of repre-

senting the court of France in the capital of the christian world. Louis XVIII was aware that he could not send to Rome any of the prelates who had resisted the orders of the pope, and for this reason he fixed upon M. de Pressigny. The great business with which the new ambassador was charged, was to negotiate the abolition of Bonaparte's concordat, and the revival of that of Francis I. It was supposed at Paris that this would be easily accomplished: in fact, France would be a great loser and the court of Rome a great gainer by the bargain: but people were unacquainted with Italian diplomacy. For the very reason because we asked, we were refused. The congregations of the sacred college, when consulted, as is usual in affairs of this kind, raised a thousand difficulties. Pius VII declared, with apparent firmness, that he would not consent to destroy his own work. All this was only a sham: they were the more peremptory in their refusal in order to make us pay the more dearly for compliance. Our ambassador was too sharp-sighted to be duped by this Italian cunning. He perceived immediately what they would be at; and adopted a language plain and sincere. This greatly disconcerted the cardinals. Still, notwithstanding the efforts of M. de Pressigny, but little progress had been made in the negotiation at the time of Bonaparte's return, and France

still enjoyed, in spite of herself, the concordat of 1802.

It was about the time that M. de Pressigny was setting out for Rome, that the diamonds of the Queen of Westphalia were found in the Seine, near the bridge of Louis XVI. I cannot tell what surprize, what rumours, this discovery occasioned in Paris, and above all, to how many conjectures it gave rise. A great deal has since been written concerning this mysterious affair; but only a small part of the veil which covered it has been removed. M. de Maubreuil, on whom alone fell the dishonour and the judicial condemnations, was not probably the only culprit; he has left on M. de Talleyrand's cheek a somewhat brutal charge of being an accomplice, from which it is to be hoped that the Memoirs of that great personage will more fully vindicate him than the tribunal of correctional police has done.

I was well acquainted with M. de Maubreuil; he had been a Vendean, a military man, and a contractor. He was certainly insane. He told me that, on the 30th of March 1814, he had tied to his horse's tail the cross of the Legion of Honour, which he had gloriously earned by his courage during the war in Spain.

About the same period, that is to say, early in 1814, I had the honour to pay my respects

to the Duchess-dowager of Orleans. This princess brought back from her long exile neither resentment, nor asperity. She might be said to have left abroad the remembrance of her personal misfortunes and those of her august family. She rejoiced at having recovered her rank and her wealth, chiefly because she could do the more good, and indulge all the suggestions of her inexhaustible beneficence. She possessed all the virtues of her father the Duke de Penthièvre. No one named this excellent woman without blessing her; no one ever dared to speak ill of her; if Madame de Genlis forms an exception, she has probably her private reasons for that.

CHAPTER XXII.

Sentiments of the king on entering the Tuileries.—The wolf shepherd.—The *N's.*—M. de Salvandy.—The age of eligibility.—The king's madrigal.—Old and new literature.—The Abbé Delille.—Sympathy of the king for M. de Jouy.—M. Baour Lormian.—Second representation of *Omasis*.—Napoleon usurping Geoffroy's ferule.—Apologetic portrait of M. de Lormian.—Independence and wants of literary men.—Benefits of the restoration.—Aristocratic tastes of modern artists.—Baron Gerard.—His portrait.—Portrait of Mademoiselle Mars.

BEFORE I proceed with the recapitulation of our faults, before I bring back upon the stage him whose neighbourhood ought to have rendered us more prudent, I will here interrupt the course of events, for the purpose of sketching the interior of that palace, which we were so soon to quit for the exile of the hundred days.

At the moment of his entry into the Tuileries, amidst the acclamations of a multitude, eager as in the time of Henry IV, to see its king, Louis XVIII was overpowered by a solemn feeling at the sight of that palace of his forefathers, still standing in all its magnificence and with its ancient colour. “The republic,” said he to me

one evening, "forgot that the Tuileries was the strong-hold, as it were, of royalty : leave a niche and the people will always finish by setting up a saint in it. From the day that Bonaparte carried his night-cap into the Tuileries, the sovereignty of the people was nothing but a dream."

The king acknowledged to me that, on the following day, he had gone through the apartments of the palace with a childish curiosity. "I asked myself, if I was sure it was I, the poor exile wandering from kingdom to kingdom, and who could not see without some degree of terror, this inscription on a pole by a high road in Germany: 'All beggars, vagrants, and emigrants are forbidden to stop here more than twenty-four hours.' Legitimacy then is not a fiction, since I am returned to seat myself on the throne of Louis XIV—I, an old man, without arms, without soldiers, with my right alone for my *ægis*! When I observed, upon my arrival, the order which prevailed in this abode, I almost felt grateful to that Napoleon, who had managed my affairs so well in my absence. He had taken care to remove all the odious traces of the passage of the revolution in this august palace. As for his initial placed every where, I regarded it as an acknowledgment of his usur-

pation, and I laughed about it with the emperor Alexander, to whom I quoted the fable of the wolf turned shepherd :

“ Il aurait volontiers écrit sur son chapeau,
C'est moi qui suis Guillot, berger de ce troupeau.”

I reminded the king on this occasion of the pun on the *N mis partout*, and he laughed almost as heartily at it as at his own quotation from the good La Fontaine.

The king told me also that the costumes and the faces of his subjects had suggested some unpleasant reflexions on the progress of time. “ I felt, alas! that I was no longer young ; there was no longer any thing French about me but my heart. I should not be able to reign, I thought, like Louis XIV and Louis XV, over a nation which wore its hair *à la Titus*. I have therefore given my charter, as a contract between the past, which I represent, and the present, that is, young France ; but it is only by the rising generation that these institutions will be thoroughly understood. In twenty years justice will be done me, for the children of the emigrants themselves will be inoculated with liberal ideas. In England there is more than one whig among the companions in exile of Charles II. The youth of France sometimes astonish me ;

they are grave, serious, and impassioned in politics alone. There is a pamphlet by a young officer of twenty (M. de Salvandy), which in my time would not have been written before fifty. I have perhaps done wrong to fix the age of eligibility to the chamber of deputies at forty. I hoped that the restoration would have restored some of the tastes of the old *régime*: alas! my good and faithful servants in *ailes de pigeon* render the last century ridiculous. They scarcely excite respect but by their misfortunes and very little by their understanding. The Count de M.... reminded me the other day of a madrigal which I composed for Queen Marie Antoinette*, and familiarly insisted that those four lines were more valuable than the charter."

I seized this opportunity of speaking again to the king concerning literary men. "What would you have?" said he; "for myself personally, I can only give them an audience, and those gentlemen are contaminated, in the opinion of our great folks, by their presumed re-

* It was as follows :

Vers sur un Eventail.

" Au milieu des chaleurs extrêmes
Heureux d'occuper vos loisirs,
J'aurai soin, près de vous d'amener les zephyrs,
Les amours y viendront d'eux-mêmes."

lationship to the old philosophers. Do you believe that Bonaparte received them more favourably than I ?

“ Sire,” I replied, “ he paid them better.”

“ Ah ! I understand you,” said the king : “ you have heard that there is an intention to reduce their pensions; but have they a better right to my indulgence than the military? both classes have alike served Bonaparte, the one with the pen, the other with the sword. The *faithful* are exceedingly importunate.”

Louis XVIII was nevertheless fond of literature ; he considered it of importance to restore to the French Academy its title of Academy ; he talked to me about the verse and prose of those gentlemen ; he judged the most eminent poets of the day as an impartial critic, not as an absolute king. I have heard him quote verses of M. Arnault’s, as well as the poems of the excellent Abbé Delille ; but he had a marked preference for the productions of the latter. “ He is *our poet*,” said he, “ faithful to the old Parnassus, as to his kings. I maintain that there is royalism in the literary worship paid to the age of Louis XIV. M. Etienne, M. de Jouy, M. Arnault, &c. may talk as they like, they belong to our times, as well as M. de Campenon.” The king was perfectly right. The ultras of literature are as much *wigs* as the ultras of legitimacy. Sound literary

doctrines bring them back by degrees to sound political doctrines; since, according to M. de Bonald, who has borrowed the phrase from somebody or other, "Literature is the expression of society." Accordingly, Louis XVIII, a man of excellent taste, preferred M. de Jouy to M. de Châteaubriand, and Madame de Genlis to Madame de Staél: but for the mismanagement of M. de Vitrolles, M. de Jouy would be at this day a peer of France. His majesty has often expressed to me all his sympathy for the talent of M. de Jouy. I am the more impartial in this avowal, inasmuch as I cannot wholly coincide in his opinion respecting the author of *Sylla*, as may be seen in a preceding chapter. The king's sentiments respecting the *Hermit* remained unchanged, even when in the sequel the *Miroir* dared to criticise the *Voyage de Paris à Bruxelles* rather too severely.

I had the exquisite satisfaction of directing his majesty's bounty to my friend M. Baour Lormian: I hope posterity will not find fault with me for it. I succeeded in all that I solicited for him, thanks to two anecdotes, which put the king into a good humour, and caused him to say that there was a good deal of Jean la Fontaine in the character of M. Baour. I first related to him how this excellent friend, who has the misfortune to be somewhat of a coward, fancied

that he had made a personal enemy of the Emperor Alexander by putting into verse one act of the *Oriflamme*; and that he is said to have kept himself concealed two days and two nights at M. Michaud's, on the capitulation of Paris. The king was afterwards strongly interested by my account of M. Baour's interview with Napoleon, on the subject of *Omasis*, and wished to hear it from his own lips. If this anecdote amused his majesty, it must amuse the reader. Here it is.

The second representation of *Omasis* took place at St. Cloud, on the 14th of September, 1806, and produced a profound sensation: the tears of Josephine decided the hardest hearts to weep. When the performance was over, Napoleon sent for the author. Search was made for him in vain at the theatre, for he had remained at Paris. Next day, an aide-de-camp brought him a letter, in which he was apprised that he would be received at St. Cloud, at eight in the morning of the 16th of September: I have the exact date, as the reader will observe. M. de Lormian waited upon the emperor at the appointed hour.

“Good day, *Monsieur le Barde*,” said Napoleon, who by this title alluded to the poems of Ossian, which M. Lormian had imitated with so much taste and felicity; “it seems you write dramatic pieces? I saw your play last night and

sent for you: why were you not at the performance?"

"Sire, because I was not invited."

This frank reply seemed not to displease Napoleon, who thus proceeded:

"I have seen your tragedy, which is no tragedy; a useless amour—a ridiculous conspiracy—no knowledge of the places—have you been in Egypt?"

"No, Sire."

"So it appears. Was it you who gave directions for the dresses?"

"I trusted that part of the business to Talma."

"Talma has made a mistake. Instead of the collar, the bracelets, and the Egyptian robe, which Joseph should wear, he appeared on the stage in the dress of a Nero. Your Rhamnes is a poor creature; when a man conspires, though but on the stage, he ought to succeed or not to meddle with the matter.....Mademoiselle Mars's blue shawl, suited her extremely well. As she plays in comedy only, why did you give her the part of your Benjamin?"

"I judged that she alone possesses the qualities required for that part."

"You did quite right....Your Simeon ought to be but a chief of the desert; you have made him a sort of amphibious personage....He ought

to be brought upon the stage with the brother whom he has sold. The piece wants that situation. 'Tis a difficult point I know, but that's your business. . . . Your Jacob is a blubberer . . . and Joseph a phrase-maker."

All these remarks thrown out without sequel or connexion, after the emperor's manner, began to annoy the poor author, who asked himself if he had been sent for to be made a fool of? Napoleon, who secretly enjoyed the vexation of M. Baour Lormian, to whose Gascon vanity he was no stranger, tormented him some time longer with his criticisms. All at once he changed his language and his tone:

" Well, *Monsieur le Barde*," said he, " I have worried you enough. Your tragedy is not a tragedy, that is indisputable; but it displays extraordinary beauties: the exposure, the scene with Benjamin, the conclusion of the fourth act and above all the fifth, are superb: the style in particular is wonderful; it is Cimarosa's music. This is an admirable beginning, but you must continue. . . . Are you well off?"

" No, Sire."

" These poets never have a *sou*."

" Your Majesty will no doubt be pleased to make a liar of the proverb."

Here Napoleon smiled, and added:

" Work away, I will provide for you. Your

Ossian is admirable ; I know Arthur's song by heart. That work has sold well : publish a splendid edition ; I will contribute to it."

Napoleon then rose from table ; for he break-fasted during this conversation, at which the Duke of Frioul and Count du Luçay, prefect of the palace, were present. He took M. de Lormian aside to the embrasure of a window and said to him :

" When you write another play, come and read it to me ; I am very fond of tragedy. I shall give you a provisional pension of two thousand crowns out of my privy purse ; by and by I will do more—that depends on you.—Adieu and without ill-will."

On the second day after this audience, M. de Lormian received from Napoleon a gold snuff-box with his cypher, containing eight thousand francs in bank-notes. For the rest, the author profited by the advice given him by Napoleon and added a scene between Omasis and Simeon ; this scene is, beyond dispute, the most effective, in a dramatic point of view, in the play. All these details, as I have observed, amused the king. His majesty afterwards said to me :

" I should not have carried the joke so far as Bonaparte : persons of my rank ought not to speak to literary men but with politeness and dignity—familiarity is dangerous."

“ *My predecessor*,” continued the king, dwelling upon those words, rewarded talent magnificently: he was in haste to give as well as to enjoy. Under the old monarchy, an income of from six to twelve hundred livres satisfied the ambition of a literary man: they were paid cheap and they did their work well too. Bonaparte enriched them, they have not shewn him much gratitude for it. All those whom he pensioned are, I am told, paying court to my ministers, by railing against their benefactor.”

Napoleon’s six thousand francs were confirmed to M. Baour Lormian, and I repeat that it was not a pension ill bestowed.

Among all the poets of the present day M. Lormian has no equal in versification, and his poetry is the most harmonious. In his works there is a brilliancy, elegance, purity, and ease, which please the least delicate ear. He combines the magic of style with grace of expression. It is a pity that almost all his compositions are but imitations of foreign models, and that we cannot form an opinion of his creations but from a very small number of pieces which are exclusively his own. He is the first satirical poet of the time: in this kind of writing he attains perfection; he is animated, terse, energetic, and severe; his satirical verses are highly wrought proverbs. In tragedy he has

the charms of Racine, and his *Omasis* is a delightful production, an admirable mixture of poetry, sensibility, and accurate delineation of manners.

Notwithstanding so much merit M. de Lormian has no longer all the reputation that is his due. Whose fault is this ? may it not be owing to the eccentricity of his disposition, and to the incredible fickleness of his imagination, which is every hour leading him into astonishing contradictions? He passes his life in forming plans which he never executes ; he will not think to-morrow as he thought to-day ; and what he liked to-day he will dislike to-morrow. I have known him in the space of six months change his lodgings four times in the same house. He carries this instability into his political principles, or, to speak more correctly, he has no political principles at all ; he goes with the stream, not from calculation, but from a yielding disposition.

He is accused of excessive vanity, owing to his being the most sincere of his colleagues. Has he more vanity than M. Delrieu, for example ? No ; but because he has more reputation, he is more annoyed. Besides, if he appreciates his own works highly, he is an excellent judge of those of others, and he treats himself with greater severity than his adversaries, for he rejects as

weak pieces of poetry which the multitude would admire.*

Louis XVIII was particularly fond of his "Jerusalem Delivered."

Sometimes expressing here the thoughts, sometimes repeating the very words of the monarch, I perceive that in order to be scrupulously exact, I appear to make him contradict himself. The fact is, that his opinions, like those of the generality of mankind, depended on his humour. I have seen him alternately admire and despise literary genius, extol and censure an author; regret that he no longer had it in his power to be generous, and almost grudge the smallest gratuity. Let not those who are strangers to the cares of royalty thence draw unfavourable conclusions. A piece of diplomatic intelligence, a speech from the tribune, an article in a newspaper, a fit of the gout, were sufficient to modify one day the best dispositions of the preceding. Considering all things, and setting aside the vexations which I have enumerated, I am of opinion that

* M. Lormian has raised himself to the first rank among the modern ballad writers by the publication of *Duranti, premier président de Toulouse*. His ballads, legends, and tales, have gained him for ever the title of a genuine poet, by the invention and exquisite versification which distinguish that eminently original work.

letters have not much to reproach the restoration with. The royal munificence has followed with respect to them the inexorable law of the figures of the budget; a few traits of parsimony cannot efface numerous acts of bounty. Look at the public institutions, look at the theatres royal, look at the French Academy, look at the Museum of Charles X ! Here is enough to obtain for the Vicomte de Rochefoucauld forgiveness for a few petty errors. The experience derived from some faults has not been lost: it is well understood that it costs less to prevent an enmity than to appease one. Literary men and artists, on their part, have learned that the king is the source of honours, and they are gradually sacrificing the silly vanity of an imaginary independence to the desire to live in assured ease. The arts and letters are essentially aristocratic. Whatever a minister may have said, a poet now-a-days needs more than a garret and fifty francs a month, and a painter absolutely requires a suitable room to work in. Nay more, we have now titled painters, painters who are men of distinction. Are there in Paris many more agreeable drawing-rooms than that of Baron Gerard ? Since I have mentioned his name, I will do him the justice to state, that this great artist, who painted the battle of Austerlitz, was one of the most eager to hail the restoration. In 1815, I accepted the offer

which he made to paint me at full length ; and I was no discredit to him at the exhibition, neither was I unserviceable to him in obtaining the appointment of first painter to his majesty. I shall therefore take leave in these chapters of continual digressions to criticise him with impartiality, in order to justify the choice of the king. Gerard is the clever fellow of painting ; his compositions are easy and brilliant ; the subject is seized with intelligence, and the arrangement is noble and scenic. His drawing is elegant but sometimes deficient in character. He is less studious of the imitation of nature than of a certain conventional fitness, which causes him to be proclaimed a man of taste by amateurs. His colouring is false, but its effects are dramatic : hence he surprises more than he charms. At a period when the very arts borrow their allusions from politics, it has been said of him that he has in painting qualities entirely ministerial. Shrewdness of mind and suppleness of conduct are the traits of his character ; he has never been known to oppose any system, or any power, or to enter the lists boldly with any artist ; nay, he prefers defying a comparison with the dead. The Entry of Henry IV faces the Marriage of Cana, and the cupola of St. Genevieve still waits for companions from his pencil.

I recollect that, when my portrait was finished, I took the liberty of telling him that I wished it

was more like that of Mademoiselle Mars, to whom I am actually said to bear a resemblance. "Madam," replied Gerard, "I have painted you with more honesty. I must confess that my portrait of Mademoiselle Mars is a master-piece of ingenuity rather than of painting. Aware that I could not satisfy the illusions produced by the diamond features of our actresses upon the stage, I was solicitous to avail myself of all that could speak to every memory, by throwing the light upon her face as it is thrown at the theatre; that is, a little from below. This artifice is perceived by very few persons, because the light of day is substituted for that of the lamps. For you, madam, I have no need of all these combinations :

"L'art n'est pas fait pour vous: en avez-vous besoin?"

With this amiable compliment I shall take leave to conclude this chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

The king's household.—Opinion of Louis XVIII respecting the conduct of the Duke of Ragusa before Paris.—Count de Vergennes.—Etienne de Durfort.—Charles de Damas.—Nansouty.—The Marquis de la Grange.—The Marquis de Dreux-Brézé.—Anecdotes respecting him.—Saying of the king's on a breach of étiquette in M. de Villele and M. Decazes.—Sensations of the king on occasion of his visit to Versailles.—Reflexions in his former cabinet.—Madame Elisabeth.—Marie Antoinette.—The great Trianon—The little Trianon.—The queen and Josephine.—The property of St. Cloud.

THE king was very inquisitive concerning the rules of étiquette adopted by Napoleon, and he smiled at times when he fancied that he had caught the upstart sovereign in a blunder. He thought it strange that he had not caused his dinner to be escorted from the kitchen to the dining-room by a detachment of his guard, according to the ancient custom—a custom which was re-established at the palace as soon as the *gardes-du-corps* were re-organised. A party of those gentlemen, commanded by a quarter-master, repairs every day to the kitchen at the hour of the royal repasts. Its duty is to superintend the passage of the viands in the covered dishes ; and then it accompanies the dinner or the breakfast. The servants who carry the different articles are

required to hold them with both hands and never to have one unoccupied.

Neither did the king approve of Napoleon's having dispensed with a noble guard, which he deemed necessary to the splendour of the throne: accordingly he lost no time in re-establishing the *gardes-du-corps*, the *gardes de la porte*, the *cent-suisses*, the *mousquetaires noirs et gris*, the *chevaux-légers*, the *gendarmes de la garde*, &c. The last four corps were suppressed by the Count de St. Germain during the reign of Louis XVI.

I have made mention elsewhere of the captains of the *gardes du corps*. The appointment of the first four passed without causing great scandal; but the choice of the two others occasioned a great deal of prating among both parties. One was Marshal Berthier: it was alleged that this post was not a suitable one for a friend of Napoleon's, a personage in whom he had placed the utmost confidence. As for Marshal Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, people were still more unjust in regard to him; and they said that this appointment was a reward for the surrender of Paris. The king warmly espoused the cause of Marshal Marmont. "It is most unjust," said he, "to condemn him; what he did before Paris was the act of a wise and able man and of a good citizen. What could he do with a handful of troops?—struggle against a superior force?—expose the

first city in France to the horrors of an assault without the least hope of success? Had he a hundred or a hundred and fifty thousand men, at least, under his command? Would you have had him renew the disaster of Moscow? The Duke of Ragusa, by his prudence on this occasion, has deserved the thanks of the Parisians. Those who censure him, I cannot help thinking, would have acted just as he did."

This sally of the king's imposed silence on the babblers in the palace, but did not acquit the Duke of Ragusa in the public opinion, which is apt to judge without reflexion and to censure rather than praise.

The Count de Vergennes, son of the former minister of Louis XVI, became captain commandant of the *gardes de la porte*; Count Charles de Damas of the *chevaux-légers*; Count Etienne de Durfort of the *gendarmes*, Count Nansouty of the *mousquetaires noirs*, and the Marquis de La Grange of the *mousquetaires gris*.

The first of these superior officers was a calm, steady man, attached to the king, without rejecting on that account all the new ideas.

The second had served in the war in America, whence he brought back ideas of liberty, which he soon discarded, when he found himself in the presence of revolutionary licentiousness. He was employed in Louis the Sixteenth's unfor-

tunate attempt at flight. Apprehended, in consequence of that affair, released, and having emigrated, he appeared at Quiberon, and at a later period a gale of wind threw him, with the Duke de Choiseul and some other proscribed persons, on the then inhospitable coast of France. He possessed valour without ostentation, agreeable manners, and a knowledge of the world, which is frequently a good substitute for ability.

The third, whom the queen sent, at the commencement of the revolution, on a secret mission abroad, retained all the principles of the old royalism in their purity : he would not have consented to any concession ; he was very uncomfortable in new France.

Count de Nansouty, ex-aide-de-camp to the emperor, brought to the king's court habits of obedience and respect to the sovereign. Under the empire he had been an excellent officer ; he became an accomplished courtier : there are such things as state graces. He was regretted by us all at his death, which took place on the 12th of February, 1815.

In treating of the etiquette of the restoration, I cannot pass over in silence etiquette personified in the Marquis de Brézé, grand-master of the ceremonies, who had spent his youth in the study of that important science, and the whole period of the revolution, sometimes in regrets that he

had nothing more to do with it, at others in ridiculing almost publicly the ceremonies of the empire and the court of Bonaparte. M. de Brézé frequently repeated the words addressed to him by Mirabeau, who said to him in the states-general: "We are assembled here by the will of the people and we will not be turned out but by the force of bayonets." He added that he made this answer: "Sir, I recognize in you only the deputy of the bailiwick of Aix and not the organ of the Assembly."

M. de Brézé firmly believed that the grandeur of the monarchy and the majesty of the crown depended on this or that salute, on this or the other ceremony, the very name of which escapes my memory. I recollect that in the month of March 1815, a general, whom the king had sent for, arrived in haste to the palace in a coloured cravat. At this sight the grand-master of the ceremonies turned pale and shuddered. He first addressed the general, with all the forms of the most exquisite politeness, requesting him to return home to substitute a cravat of the prescribed hue for the obnoxious one. The general, replied that he would willingly do it, but that he had no time, as the king desired to see him immediately.

M. de Dreux-Brézé then took off the cravat of one of the guards, and would have forced the

general to put it on. At this moment the Duke de La Châtre appeared: he came to fetch the general; M. de Brézé ran up to him and said: "Monsieur le duc, I hope you will not permit this gentleman to appear before the king in a coloured cravat: never was such a costume admitted at the Tuilleries; it is absolutely contrary to all established custom."

The Duke de La Châtre, a sensible man, could scarcely refrain from laughter. "My dear Brézé," replied he, "the king's will is superior to all rules of etiquette, since etiquette was invented for him."

"Ah, madam!" said the grand-master of the ceremonies, turning towards me with a look of sincere and profound grief, "ah, madam! that is the way to produce a revolution!"

Accordingly, M. de Brézé has ever since reckoned the general's coloured cravat among the fatal causes of the 20th of March. It was he who in 1814 prohibited the admittance of trowsers into the apartments of the palace, and who, out of gratitude for the service rendered by the allies, permitted the English to come thither in gaiters. You should have heard what a value he put upon this indulgence: according to him, it ought to have been sufficient to satisfy all the claims of the allies, and to make a proper acknowledgment for it, in his opinion, they should have remitted

the war contribution. If, at the first return of the king, the darling etiquette of M. de Brézé was sometimes slighted, he resumed all his rights after the hundred days. You would have supposed that this second restoration was effected for the exclusive triumph of the grand-master of the ceremonies of France.

The king amused himself with this personage, but at bottom he thought as he did, laughing with me at that ceremonial the observance of which he rigorously enforced. I recollect that, in the last year of his life, seeing M. Joseph de Villele, during the council, lay his snuff-box without ceremony on the king's bureau, he could not forbear saying to him : " Monsieur le Comte, there is a place here for your portfolio, but that for your snuff-box is exclusively in your waist-coat pocket."

On this occasion his majesty said to me : " These provincials care about nothing ; indeed I am surprised that Messrs. de Corbière and de Peyronnet have not offered me a pinch of snuff out of their box, or helped themselves without ceremony to a pinch out of mine."

The king was fond of M. Decazes and nevertheless reproached him for being ill-bred : the latter threw his hat upon the first chair that he came to ; the king sought by all possible hints to break him of this familiar way. Finding that

they were not taken, he one day said to him: "Sir, a well-bred man keeps his hat upon his head when he is walking in the street, and he puts it under his arm or upon his knees when he is in an apartment."

The king resolved to visit Versailles; it was the place of his birth and where he had passed his youth; he felt an irresistible desire to behold once more that residence of his family, where every spot was endeared to him by recollections. He had found Paris filled with the works of Napoleon: the Louvre, the Tuileries, the Place du Carrousel, the quays, a great number of buildings, all reminded him of the reign of Bonaparte. There was nothing of the kind at Versailles. That palace, that park, those solitary groves, were still full of the great age. He, who had scattered his monuments over all France, continued the Louvre, hung Notre Dame with his colours, and overlooked the capital from the top of his column of bronze, had not thought himself rich enough to furnish Versailles, acknowledging, in some measure, that he was outdone by the greatness of Louis XIV, and recoiling from an upholsterer's bill.

"I breathed with delight," said the king, whose feelings I here express, "in that beloved abode of my ancestor; its pompous solitude charmed me more than the admirable society

of the Tuileries had done. I was fond of traversing those alleys, those parterres, and especially those immense halls and that vast gallery, where every thing transported me into another age.

“ I desired to be conducted to my old apartments, and on entering my cabinet I begged to be left alone there for a moment. It had been hastily supplied with some articles of furniture which, from their antiquity and their form, I knew to have been *ours* and consequently *mine*. I seated myself in an arm-chair of red velvet, with gilt nails, such as I formerly had in that room. Ah! how many ideas crowded upon me, while thinking of all those whom I had known and who had disappeared, like OEdipus, in a storm! I called to mind my brother, who, amidst all this pomp, was intent only on the happiness of his subjects, and my sister, that excellent Elizabeth, an angel upon earth, and whom monsters sent to heaven with the crown of martyrdom!

“ Amidst all the illusions which, for a moment, made my ideas young again, I resigned myself entirely to a sort of vision of the past. Versailles appeared to me in all its pristine splendour, when all at once I heard under the window numerous cries of *Vive le Roi!* Is the king going out a-hunting already? said I to myself, forgetting that I was king and not the unfortunate

Louis XVI. It was the hour that I had fixed for going to the great Trianon. There I again found Bonaparte and his vulgar taste: he had taken it into his head to have all the ceilings of the apartments, which were formerly gilt, painted grey. From the great I went to the little Trianon, where the recollections of my youth again thronged upon me: they were the same gardens, the same pavilions, where our family parties performed plays; it was in the village on the banks of that lovely lake, that the court laid aside its grandeur, to realize the plans of Don Quixote, when he proposed to Sancho to seek happiness in a pastoral life. Here the beautiful Marie Antoinette was nothing but a farmer's girl, and the fairest of her titles next to her own was that of the milk-maid. We never suspected that a day would come when that private condition, to which we descended for recreation, would be in reality envied by us.

"I remember the brilliant *fête* which the queen gave at the little Trianon to her brother, the emperor, and the tasteful illumination of those delicious bowers, when fifteen hundred faggots were burned for the purpose of lighting the temple of Love in a picturesque manner. I went over the apartments: I was struck with the elegance of a bed, with hangings of muslin embroidered with gold stars.

“Who slept in this bed?” I enquired.

“The queen,” was the reply.

“Oh!” I rejoined; “it looks so fresh that it must certainly have been used by somebody since.”

“Josephine,” they answered me at last.

“Is there, thought I, in the little Trianon something unlucky to crowned females? There Marie Antoinette had no thought of the scaffold, nor Josephine of her humiliating divorce.

“In walking through the garden,” continued the king, “I observed marigolds* growing by a fine bunch of lilies. This approximation did not escape me; and while the multitude was greeting me with joyous *vivats*, and all about me had put on a holiday look, I began to hum the first stanza of a song, which abroad had frequently drawn bitter tears from my beloved niece, the new and pious Antigone:

“*Dans les jardins de Trianon,
Je cueillais des roses nouvelles,
Mais, hélas ! les fleurs les plus belles
Avaient péri sous les glaçons.
J'eus beau chercher les dons de Flore,
Les hivers les avaient détruits ;
Je ne trouvais que des soucis,
Qu'humectaient les pleurs de l'Aurore.*”

* The French name for them is, *soucis*, cares.

Translator.

The king paused; I was apprehensive lest he would give way to too painful a melancholy, and to dispel it, I asked him if he left Versailles without thinking of Madame de la Vallière and the Marquise de Montespan. This question led him back in reality to more cheerful ideas.

The king talked for several days of this excursion, and particularly of those who had lived at Versailles with him, as, the Prince de Poix, the Duke de la Châtre, the Duke de Duras, &c., &c: he even scolded the second because he had not yet performed this sentimental pilgrimage.

His majesty had formed the design of restoring this paternal residence to its ancient splendour; but when the architects and the superintendant of the *Garde-Meuble* had delivered to him their estimates of the expense, the *upholsterer's bill* frightened him, as it had done Bonaparte: the most urgent repairs only were made and the furniture was not ordered.

Since I am on the subject of palaces, I shall observe that the palace of St. Cloud was almost an apple of discord in the royal family. It was purchased by Louis XVI for the queen, and had afterwards became national property. The first consul took possession of it, and subsequently, when he made himself emperor, he declared that St. Cloud formed part of the domains of the

imperial crown. At the restoration, the Duchess of Angoulême conceived, with good reason, that this palace was to revert to her, by virtue of the law which restored to emigrants their unsold property. Against this the exchequer urged the imperial decree of annexation to the domains of the crown; and it was alleged that, as Versailles could not be occupied, it was requisite that the king should retain St. Cloud. It was agreed that he should hold it during his life. I believe that the princess received an indemnity, and at the same time her right to the palace was confirmed: it is she who appoints the governor and the other officers, and she there receives the king as at her own residence.

Louis XVIII who was so very tenacious of his legitimacy, thought it quite natural that, on this occasion, the legitimacy of others should not be regarded. I have heard him maintain that St. Cloud belonged to him by virtue of the *laws of the State*, that is to say, by a decree of Bonaparte's.

CHAPTER X XIV.

Royalty in tête-à-tête.—Mythological comparison.—The orders of the Holy Ghost, St. Michael, and St. Louis.—The Legion of Honour.—Promotion of the Knights of the Holy Ghost.—Old epigram revived.—Important business of hoops, powder, etc. discussed before the king.—The old and the new court.—The ladies of the empire.—My uncle the king and my aunt the queen.—Maréchale Lefebvre.

I KNOW not how I succeeded one day in making the king so well pleased with me, or rather perhaps with himself, that he told me there was nothing he could refuse me.

“ Sire,” I replied, yielding to a perfectly feminine whim, “ permit me then to satisfy my vanity by requesting you to act the king before me alone.”

“ Explain yourself.”

“ Well, Sire; give me audience with all the insignia of royalty, and admit no other person but me that day.”

Louis XVIII complied, and when he was dressed in all his decorations, he had the goodness to say to me, laughing at his classic allusion, that I was more conversant with mythology than with my bible, since I had imitated Semele, who desired to see Jupiter invested with all the

splendour of Olympus. "Alas!" he added, "you run no risk of being set on fire!"

"Sire," said I, in my turn, "this royal costume is enough to dazzle the eyes of an humble subject, but in you benignity tempers majesty."

While I was closely examining all the orders which glistened on his royal person, "That is what I most value in my insignia," said Louis XVIII, "all these stars embrace a complete course of history. Would you believe that I have been solicited to suppress them? I have nevertheless retained them: the orders constitute part of the monarchy."

It was in fact, not without difficulty that the king had defended the orders of the Holy Ghost, St. Louis, and St. Michael, against his advisers. They represented that as the first, agreeably to its statutes, could be conferred on the nobility alone, it would become a source of discord at court, where there were a great number of military men and high functionaries, children of the revolution, all commoners, and who would not bear with patience to be deprived of the principal decoration of the state.

The king, struck with this objection, was convinced that a nomination to blue ribands would produce a civil war in the palace. As he was equally apprehensive of displeasing men

whose animosity might be dangerous to him, he had of himself decided at the first glance that his courtiers would not contend with advantage against those of the new *régime* :—he therefore resolved to wave the question.

“ I will not make any promotion,” said he, “ till I shall be too firmly seated on the throne to have occasion to ask each individual what he thinks of this or the other measure. But I will not abolish at any rate that venerable order which two centuries have consecrated ; the people cannot figure to themselves a king of France without the blue riband.”

I remarked to him that the order of St. Michael, which had for a long time been conferred on inferior persons only, might without any inconvenience be relinquished.

“ You employ a very improper expression,” replied the king : “ it is not conferred on *inferior* persons, but on the contrary, on men of merit, who have rendered services to the sciences, literature, and the arts. As for the cross of St. Louis, is there a more glorious decoration ? Assuredly I shall never abandon it to the jealousy of the men of the new order ; I would have them, on the contrary, to be proud of wearing it, and to consider it as superior to that which they already have.”

I shall here state that, from the first moment

of the restoration, it had been a question whether the Legion of Honour should be suppressed. On this subject a memorial had been presented, in which it was proposed to substitute the order of St. Louis to the other for military men, with the addition of silver crosses for privates and subalterns; and to give, instead of it, the black riband (the order of St. Michael) to magistrates and civil functionaries. This plan was submitted to the king, but not approved by him: he was sensible of the danger of such a measure, and in his superior wisdom he confirmed the Legion of Honour by a special article of the charter; but the *star of the brave* was not on that account the more respected by the old courtiers. It was, however, a very happy idea to supersede the effigy of Bonaparte by that of Henry IV; no other name could by its popularity combat with greater advantage the renown of Napoleon.

His majesty at a later period broke the vow which he had made to himself before me; in 1820 he made a promotion of blue ribands in which, yielding to the force of circumstances, he included a number of commoners, whose appointment reminded me of this epigram, composed in the time of Louis XIV, on the promotion of 1688:

“ Le roi, que la bonté met à toutes épreuves,
Voulant gratifier les chevaliers nouveaux,
En a dispensé vingt de porter les manteaux,
Et trente de faire leurs preuves.”

The attention of his majesty was not wholly engrossed by the orders, royal or imperial; other subjects of minor importance were discussed by Louis XVIII, or by those about him and the persons admitted to their intimacy. Such as had just returned from emigration could not accustom themselves to the fashions of modern France. The form of gowns, the cut of coats, the shape of hats, became almost affairs of state. I cannot help laughing to this day when I think of a scene which I witnessed one evening after dinner. The actors were the king, the Duke de La Châtre, the Prince de Poix, the Marquis de Brézé, a lady whom I cannot name with any degree of propriety, and myself.

King. Well, my dear Brézé, when will you lay before me your important paper on the dress of the gentlemen and ladies presented to me?

Brézé. I am engaged upon it, Sire; indeed, I can think of nothing else night and day.

Lady. Our poor Brézé is indeed one of the pillars of the old *régime*.

King. Shall we have powder, hoops, and fur-belowss?

La Châtre. I apply, Sire, for short breeches, curls, and queue.

Poir. And I apply for an indemnification in case we are obliged to resume the old dress before our new ones are worn out. As for the ladies,

if they absolutely must be encompassed with a rampart of hoops, I hope people will have the gallantry not to revive the term *vertugadin*.

Lady Prince de Poix, you are a bit of a jacobin.

The Prince de Poix laughed and protested his royalism.

The Marquis de Brézé heaved a sigh which rent our hearts. The king took the matter in good part, and said to the Marquis de Dreux-Brézé; "If the vestiary counter-revolution is absolutely indispensable, we had better go back to the *ruffs* of our great-grandmothers."

His majesty had introduced that word as a peg to hang an anecdote upon: we guessed as much by his self-complacent look and all listened most attentively. He proceeded to relate a story of Queen Anne of Austria which made us blush a little. I shall not repeat it, out of respect for that great queen. The discussion terminated in our assent to a truth of M. de Dreux Brézé: "Depend upon it," said he, addressing himself pointedly to me; who had laughed more heartily perhaps than any of the others; "depend upon it, that dress makes half the man, and that equality in this particular confounds ranks and leads direct to an agrarian law." The whole political system of the good marquis was embraced, as may be seen, in these words of Figaro's:

“ Many a one laughs at a judge in a coat, who trembles before an advocate in a gown.”

This discussion on ancient fashions was confined to ourselves; no profane ear was admitted to it; that is to say, we summoned to the council none of the ladies of the imperial court, though they were received at the palace. We divided them into two classes, those of the old stamp, who, exercising the imprescriptible right of nobility, which remains when dynasties change, had rallied round Napoleon, as our ancestors did round Hugh Capet.

We certainly took the liberty of discharging at them now and then some satirical shafts and some bitter-sweet remarks: but upon the whole, it was agreed, in regard to those who had sincerely renewed their attachment to the legitimate throne, that their presence at the Tuileries during the empire had been but a visit to the *palace* and not to the man by whom it was occupied.

So much indulgence was not shewn to the class of upstart ladies. All of them had not been educated at Ecouen; their manners were continually belying their titles and their rich attire. It is impossible to be of low parentage with impunity. Bonaparte was proud of his hands, and he had reason, for they were aristocratic. There is something in noble blood which causes a well-bred woman not to blush like another. Let me

not be told, in the name of liberal ideas, that *nobility* is nothing: I would just ask wealthy commoners then why they are so anxious to be ennobled? The upstart ladies were quite astonished at being known by their figure or their accent: they were ready to die with vexation. As for us, justice obliges me to confess that we had not the good sense to perceive that we were violating good manners by amusing ourselves rather too often with their awkwardness. Had we lost during the empire the tradition of the genuine sentiments of the high nobility of former times, whose general attributes were polite affability and indulgent simplicity? Alas! yes, the spirit of party let us down to the gossip and the ridiculous contempt of the petty nobility of the country. The king had frequently the generosity to espouse the cause of the *ennobled* against the noble ladies: but the latter scrupled not, as it is well known, to discover a *bourgeois* and liberal air in the king himself. It was he nevertheless who paid the penalty for our follies. The offended ladies quarrelled with monarchy on account of the affronts offered them by a few couriers' wives.

I shall not here repeat the grievances of Marshal Ney's lady, nor those of Marshal Marmont's, nor even those of Marshal Suchet's, whom we thought still more vulgar than the

others, an account of her habit of saying, my uncle the king, and my aunt the queen; but it was not always that we came off so well with Marshal Lefebvre's, who entered the new court somewhat sore from the jokes directed against her at the imperial court. Her coarse good sense replied victoriously to more than one sally, and her smart repartees, injudiciously provoked, drove back many persons of suspected virtue to their proper places.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The king's rising.—Breakfast.—Mass.—The council.—Excursions of the king.—Dinners.—Details.—Temperance of the Duke of Berry.—The Duke of Orleans.—Sentiment of the king concerning him.—Reciprocal pretensions of the Spanish branch and that of Orleans.—Saying of a marshal of France on that subject.—Evening employment of the king.—The black cabinet.—Letter to Wellington.—Danger of an invasion for young modest women.

“PUNCTUALITY is the politeness of kings.” This saying of Louis the Eighteenth's makes amends, I hope, for Louis the Fourteenth's, *I had like to have been kept waiting*. If his majesty was strict in the observance of the etiquette bequeathed to him by his august ancestor as the code of the court of France, this was the effect

of his love of order rather than of a puerile fondness for forms. Still, notwithstanding some jokes about M. de Dreux-Brézé, the king himself, as I have said, required scrupulous regularity in the service of the palace. Here are some particulars concerning the *grand lever*, for which I shall have need to invoke the genius which inspired Madame de Genlis in the compilation of a certain dictionary, which Louis XVIII regarded as one of her best works.

The king lay, not in his great bed, but in a smaller and very low one which was prepared for him and removed every morning. The king fixed every night the hour of his rising, and orders were given to the *valet-de-chambre* on duty to awake his majesty in case he should be asleep at the time appointed. But the first *valet-de-chambre* on duty had previously gone into the king's room with the footmen to extinguish the light called *mortier*, to kindle a fire if it was winter-time, and take in the night collation, consisting of a jug of wine, another of pure water, bread, a fowl, some fruit, a goblet of silver gilt, and several napkins.

The king being awake, the grand chamberlain and the first gentleman of the bed-chamber were informed that they might enter, whilst a valet went to direct the officers of the kitchen and buttery to prepare his majesty's breakfast. At the same

time an usher took possession of the door of the chamber, that only such persons as had a right to come and pay their respects to him might be suffered to pass. His majesty chose this time to tell the first valet to admit the *grande entrée*.

The *grande entrée* consists of the great officers of the household and the crown, persons of quality, certain marshals of France, and some privileged ladies, who share this favour with the *cravatier*, the tailor, the slipper-bearer, the barber in ordinary, the two barber-assistants, the clock-maker, and the apothecaries.

While all these persons are making their way into the chamber, the first valet pours upon his majesty's hands a bottle of spirit of wine into a silver-gilt bowl; the napkin is presented by the grand chamberlain or the first gentleman, or the grand-master of the wardrobe, or even by the *premier*. The vessel of holy water is then presented, and the king, having made the sign of the cross, repeats or is supposed to repeat some prayer before he rises from bed. Louis XVIII put on his slippers himself; it was a service which his courtiers would not have disdained; but the king made them amends by granting them the honour of holding his morning-gown while he put it on. This done, he went to the arm-chair in which he was to dress himself.

The king then asked for his *chamber*, that is,

those who were not yet there. The usher on duty took hold of the door, and his colleague went and whispered in the ear of the first gentleman the names of the princes, ambassadors, cardinals, bishops, dukes and peers, marshals of France, lieutenant-generals, first presidents, attorney-generals, peers and deputies, who might be present; and the first gentleman repeated their names to the king.

The officers of the household passed unquestioned: but the moment an unknown face presented itself among the others, the owner was stopped by the usher, who asked his name, and decided in his wisdom whether he could permit him to enter without referring to the first gentleman. All who came thither were obliged to conform without a murmur to these customs; it was likewise requisite for them to know that they were to *scratch* and not to *knock*; and lastly that a closed door was to be opened only by the usher or by the officer on duty at it.

The moment for the king to dress being arrived, two pages of the chamber stationed themselves so as to shift his majesty's slippers when required. His shirt was brought covered with white taffeta: to present it to the king was an eminent distinction, coveted by the highest noblemen of the realm. The king put it on in the presence of the multitude, but, for decency's

sake, two valets-de-chambre held his morning gown extended before him. This done, and the small-clothes as well as the waistcoat being placed by the master of the wardrobe, the sword, blue riband, and cross of St. Louis were brought, and afterwards the coat. It was the rule that the king should empty with his own hands the pockets of the clothes which he wore the preceding day, and that he should tie his cravat himself: three pocket handkerchiefs were handed to him in a dish of silver gilt; etiquette permitted him to take one, two, or even all three.

A valet held a mirror before the king during the whole time of dressing, and two others lighted him with flambeaux, or were supposed to do so. The various orders being given for the day, the king frequently granted audience to the nuncio or to the ambassadors; and I ought to observe here, that those of Spain and Naples had precedence of the others, as representing members of the family. On this subject it may not be amiss to state that the Infanta of Spain, having become grand-duchess of Lucca by the treaty of 1814, demanded for her enyoys the honours due to those of crowned heads, on account of the kingdom of Etruria which she had for some time possessed: but that royalty was not recognized by the king and on this point he was inflexible.

Louis XVIII usually breakfasted either just

before or just after mass, according to the distribution of his time. He admitted to his table several of the great officers of his household. He had a good appetite and was particularly fond of mutton-chops so arranged as to allow him to make but a single mouthful of each of them : he also liked truffles boiled in champaign, but to please him it was necessary that they should be burning hot.

In going to mass he took pleasure in stopping in the hall of the marshals to receive such petitions as were presented to him : he received them with a most encouraging graciousness, and then handed them to the persons of his retinue. The petitioners had no doubt that he perused their requests with attention : alas ! they were dismissed, to be referred from one to another with the sonnet of Orontes.

After mass the king returned to his apartments : the ministers sometimes came to the council, at other the courtiers of the king's private circle.

The king in general took his daily excursion from one to five : on his return dinner was served up. In 1814, the royal family dined regularly with the king : the Duke of Berry frequently took leave of absence, and was reproved for it by his uncle and his father. That prince, notwithstanding what has been said to the contrary was extremely temperate. The king occupied

an arm-chair; Monsieur, the princes, and Madame royale, had only chairs without arms.

The dinner was not conducted in silence: the members of the royal family chatted together, and called to the conversation the officers of the household who attended the repast, which generally lasted an hour. The company then adjourned to the king's apartment, where they conversed some time longer, and after which each retired to his own rooms. This custom of dining together was gradually discontinued after 1815.

The Duke of Orleans, his wife, and his sister, were rarely invited. The intercourse between the two families became more frequent when the Duchess of Berry arrived. But the king obstinately refused, from what motive I know not, to give to the princes of the house of Orleans the title of royal highness. On this point it was impossible to get the better of him. Charles X has shewn more confidence and conciliation. On this subject I recollect hearing a discussion between the king and the Duke de La Châtre, on the right of succession to the throne of France possessed by the branches of Spain and Orleans. His majesty grew so warm in the dispute as to prove that the solution of the question was by no means a matter of indifference to him. The Duke de la Châtre contended that the renunciation

of Philip V disqualifed his posterity for enjoying an inheritance which he had solemnly relinquished, and that moreover, it was a fundamental law of the State, and one on which formerly so much stress had been laid against Bonaparte, that to reign in France it was requisite to be a Frenchman. Now, the King of Spain was to all intents and purposes a Spaniard.

The king would not admit the validity of the argument, and maintained that the descendants of Philip V were French. I was present at this discussion, and I could have singularly perplexed an exalted personage by choosing this moment to repeat language which I had heard him hold. There was a marshal of France, one of the major-generals of the guard, who said in my presence, that if it were desirable to bring this question to an issue during the time of his being on duty, he would not hesitate, immediately after the decease of the late king, to open the great window of the balcony of the hall of the marshals and to proclaim the Prince of Orleans King of France.

After a family conversation when dinner was over, the persons admitted to the intimate familiarity of the king, and the minister to whom he granted the greatest share of his confidence, came to pay him their respects, to talk with him, and to receive his commands. It was at this

moment that I usually repaired to the palace : the king then felt a necessity for recreation, as may easily be conceived, after the occupations of the day ; and this time he called *the hours of royal relaxation*.

Then commenced a lively and interesting chat. The anecdotes of the day were mustered. The great art was to amuse while sticking as closely as possible to the truth ; for the king liked to have two versions of the same story, that he might compare the talents of the narrators.

The police sometimes furnished the subjects of this royal relaxation, but very rarely the post-office, notwithstanding the official complaisance of the *black cabinet*. The king compared this epistolary office to the mysterious echo of Dionysius of Syracuse, which conveyed the most profound secrets to the ear of the sovereign. After two or three extracts which made us laugh, this recreation was almost wholly relinquished. I should betray a *confession* were I ever to reveal what I learned through that channel : suffice it therefore to transcribe here a copy of a burlesque letter, which belongs to the history of the occupation of France by the allies. I had lent this copy to M. de Puymaurin, an eminently facetious man, who has just returned it to me with a handsome collection of medals. This letter was opened on account of the direction : it was

important to ascertain what was the writer's business with the personage to whom it was addressed, and who was no other than his grace the Duke of Wellington. I shall not take the liberty of altering a word for the sake of the style or a letter for the orthography, let M. de Bourrienne consider this epistle ever so unacademic*.

“ Monseigneur et illustre maréchal et prince suprême.

“ Dans le cours du courant du mois de Janvier 1814, le 25ème régiment d'Angleterre des gardes du corps du roi à cheval, il a brûlé une grange en bois et pierre de Jean de Gaurolle de Louhousson, cette même cavalerie il a bu et mangé pendant le jour et la nuit, qu'ils ont dormi dans la maison de Gaurolle, 25 quintaux de foin, et 30 quintaux aussi de pail, sans compter le vin de deux barriques de vin blanc, dont ils ont fait le brûlement en la dite grange.

“ Marie Huparteguy qui était alors pour faire le mariage d'avec Jouanis de Gaurolle maître de la maison, a été volonté par un soldat écossais sans culotte ou avec un cotillon, et ensuite maltraitée dans les reins à coup de bride de cavalerie, pourquoi ? Parceque la dite Marie Huparteguy

* As it is scarcely possible to do justice to this letter in English it is given in the original language.—*Translator.*

voulait soutenir de son humanité et protection du dit Jouanis, le corps des coups et du brûlement de la grange et la consommation du vin et du fourrage, comme pail, foin etc., pour les chevaux, mais comme le dit Jouanis et Marie Huparteguy, ils ne veulent plus garder l'enfant qui est venu au monde par la violation du soldat écossais, ils veulent faire une longue pétition de cette affaire à lord Wellington, bien écrit duc d'Angleterre, et le général en chef des armées anglaises actuellement dans le royaume de France, pour lui disposer au dit général anglais et très respectueusement, toutes les circonstances et détails circonstanciés et détaillés concernant la brûlure et l'incendie de la grange et barriques vides, du vin blanc et aussi l'enlevation du vin et de la subsistance du fourrage, foin et paille, sans la violence faite à la personne de Marie Huparteguy, dont il n'est pas le père de l'enfant, mais si le cavalier à cheval écossais.

“ C'est pourquoi les dits Jouanis et Marie Huparteguy font l'imploration de l'humanité de la loi et justice de l'Angleterre, et encore du lord Wellington, pour demander que la sensibilité et pitié de l'innocence de l'enfant et de la grange brûlée soit mise à l'hôpital de Saint-Jean de Luz, et la somme de tous les préjudices dommages et intérêts, conformément aux lois de la générosité souffrante de l'Angleterre, qui a toujours payé

dans le pays Roique et environ environnant le vin et fourrage qu'il a mangé pendant la guerre et la paix. Tout cela se faisant en justice, ledit Jouanis promit d'épouser ladite Marie Huparteguy qui n'est pas mise en mariage à cause de son enfantement, dont l'enfantillage appartient comme il est dit plus haut, au soldat écossais, &c."

Never did article cause more merriment, and certainly if our knowledge of it had not been obtained through the black cabinet I should have used my influence with Lord Wellington, that poor Marie Huparteguy might be married after the payment of the damages.

This letter has carried me far away from my subject, which was the manner in which the king passed the day. He finished it by going to bed, like the meanest of his subjects; but here began again that string of ceremonies which render a palace a Bastille and a king a prisoner of state.

But I pause at the threshold of the sanctuary and I respect its sacred repose.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The king in an ill-humour.—Letter to the Prince Regent.—Indiscretion.—Allusion to the letter from Mittau.—Napoleon's secretary.—Orthography.—Romantic declamation of Talma.—Lekain.—Bad taste of Napoleon.—Louis XVIII faithful to the classic traditions.—Valuable copy of the charter.—Disappointment in regard to dress.—The king dines in state.—The grand-master of the ceremonies.—*La nef.*

ABOUT the middle of the month of July 1814, as I entered the king's apartment, I perceived that he was in an ill-humour; he was holding a pamphlet, which he rumpled between his hands with impatience, and threw violently into a basket placed under the table for the reception of waste paper. With a view to abstain from saying any thing that could displease him, I began the convenient chapter about rain and fine weather. This was not what suited him; for it was incapable of diverting him from the current of his ideas, and he answered me sharply at the height of his loud voice:

“ What is it to me if the weather is rainy or fine ? The gout confines me to my chair, and I

can enjoy only just so much of nature, as I can see through my window."

From the surliness of this rejoinder, I was aware that I had not attained my object. I therefore assumed a look half-smiling, half-vexed, and complained in my turn, of the harshness with which I was treated.

"To tell the truth," said he, "I have something else than that trash to think of: I am tormented in all possible ways; I am harassed behind and before—friends and foes, subjects and foreigners, are all aiming their shafts at me with insupportable precision."

"That is a misfortune, Sire, inseparable from your situation: you are nevertheless beloved; France greets you with the fond name of the Desired; the allied powers manifest equal attachment and consideration for you...."

"O yes, trust to them! why there is not one of them, but would betray me if it were to its interest, or turn its back on me, provided fortune were to desert me."

"You exaggerate things; there is the Prince-Regent of England, for example, is not he a staunch friend?"

"That —— of a friend!" exclaimed the king, in too great a rage to be very particular in the choice of his expressions; "he has just been giving me this very day a proof of his affection."

“ Why, what has he done, Sire, to displease you ?”

“ What has he done ? you know as well as I do. The English newspapers, and the pamphlets of Paris will proclaim it to all the world.”

From the last words I knew what was the matter, and I merely replied :

“ Ah ! your letter to the Prince-Regent ?”

“ Yes, my letter, which ought to have remained between him and me, and which is now making the tour of Europe. Allowing myself a little exaggeration in that letter, which is by no means destined for the official part of the Moniteur, I told him, that *next to God, I was indebted to him for my crown.* This expression of thanks has no more meaning, than the *most humble servant* in a letter from a gentleman to a tradesman ; but this prince of shopkeepers pounces upon it, as though it were the ransom of another King John, and discovers in it an expression of allegiance. Delighted to humble my kingdom in my person he gives up my note to the commentaries of his newspapers.”

I could do no other than join the king in condemning the impertinence of the Prince-Regent, and this led his majesty to make some further remarks on the son of George III, and on Charles VII, who delivered France from the English. After this scene, I declare that I

could see nothing but a compliment of courtesy in that letter, for which Louis XVIII has been so severely censured.

The letter to the Prince-Regent, led to the chapter concerning the celebrated correspondence, which took place between his majesty and Bonaparte. Louis XVIII prided himself on the dignity of his letter from Mittau; he still knew it by heart. Just at this moment, was introduced the former secretary to the first consul, the amiable and clever M. de Bourrienne, whom disgrace or the ingratitude of the emperor had thrown into our ranks long before 1814.

"Monsieur de Bourrienne," said the king to him, "we are upon a chapter that concerns you, for I know that you corrected Bonaparte's letters."

"Sire," replied M. de Bourrienne, "Napoleon had need of a corrector, he was ignorant even of orthography."

"Indeed!" said the king evidently delighted to make M. Bourrienne repeat the thing.

"Yes, Sire," replied the latter like a shrewd man, who loses no opportunity of paying an indirect compliment. "Yes, Sire, his was certainly the thickest head in the world, in regard to grammar. Such is the secret of his elliptic style, and of his fondness for the abrupt and verbless sentences of Ossian. The beautiful

classic verses of Racine lulled him to sleep; they recalled to the ear of the upstart monarch, the regular pomp of the great age.

“ He is nevertheless a member of the Institute,” said the king laughing.

“ Yes, Sire, and he placed this title at the head of his proclamations in Egypt: but he knows no more about the French language than Marshal Saxe did.

“ I should suppose,” rejoined the king, “ that it was he who spoiled the declamation of Talma, who seems to me purposely to strip the poetry of Racine of its noble harmony: you would take it to be prose. It is revolutionary declamation; it was not so that Lekain declaimed.”

M. de Bourrienne coincided in this opinion also, and the conversation became so animated as to make the king entirely forget his letter to the Prince-Regent.

I have omitted to notice a present which I received from the king, which, however, I ought to mention, for his majesty sometimes alluded to it: this was Royaumont’s bible, magnificently bound, and full of beautiful prints, covered with rich silk paper. The reader will perhaps be surprised that the king should make me a present of a bible. I had betrayed my ignorance of a circumstance in sacred history.

“ You ought to apply yourself again to

thes tudy of the Old Testament," said Louis XVIII.

" Yes, Sire, and for that purpose I will to-morrow purchase a bible."

" No, do not buy it; I shall do myself the pleasure of offering you one."

I thought no more of my ignorance or of his majesty's promise, when, a week afterwards, the bible was brought to me; for the promise of a King of France ought to be sacred as gospel.

A few days afterwards, I found his majesty engaged in making annotations with his own hand to a copy of the charter; it was the day before its promulgation.

" Here is my true title to glory," said he. " I had to choose between the reign of will and pleasure, and the despotism of Bonaparte: I have embraced all the real wants of the times. This is not a constitution framed on the spur of the occasion, but the result of my attentive study of all the constitutions given to France since 1789. A new æra is commencing; that of representative governments. People demand liberty; I give them sufficient to secure them from despotism, but not enough to allow them to fall into licentiousness. I know that our incorrigibles allege that I am relinquishing my rights; on the contrary, I am preserving them all. My predecessors had, by compulsory concessions, renounced almost all appointments; I have not

given up one. Formerly the taxes imposed by my mere will would have rendered me odious; now it is not I, but France, that lays them upon herself. I can no longer do any thing but *what is right*; and as for what is wrong, the responsibility falls entirely upon the ministers. What vexes me is, that I am going to open Bonaparte's legislative body, which I shall appear to be continuing: I would rather have dispensed with that chamber and called a new one, but I was obliged to yield out of gratitude for the service which it rendered me in April last."

I afterwards heard of another point in which the king was crossed. He disliked exceedingly to appear at this ceremony in *undress*: he would fain have exhibited himself in a long mantle, with the crown on his head, and the sceptre in his hand, displaying the pomp and circumstance of sovereign power, but this was impossible; he was not yet anointed; and inexorable etiquette would not on any account permit the monarch to assume the royal insignia, till the sacred oil had been poured upon his head. On this subject, the Marquis de Brézé complained seriously to me, that the king had sat for his picture in the royal habiliments, before he had been at Rheims. What would he have said, had he known what an honour I had enjoyed entirely by myself!

The day after this memorable sitting, at which I was present in one of the tribunes of the diplomatic body, the king wished to know what impression it had made upon me.

“Sire,” said I, “henceforward I am in favour of the charter: to me it will be the tables of the law; I hope never to worship the golden calf.”

“Very well,” said his majesty, “I am glad to see that you have profited by the perusal of my bible. Here is a copy of the charter, which I should like you to read.”

I received with respect that valuable copy bound in Russia leather, gilt on the edges of the leaves, printed on rose-coloured paper, and each leaf protected, like the engravings in my bible, by fine silk paper.

I ought here to conclude these notes, thrown together without order, and somewhat foreign to history, by the description of the first dinner in the Tuilleries, at which the public was admitted to admire royalty at table—a sight dear to the Parisians. M. de Dreux-Brézé was that week the busiest man in the kingdom.

All the officers of the king’s kitchen requisite according to the rules of ancient etiquette, were not yet appointed; the deficiency was supplied as well as possible. The table was arranged in the form of a horse-shoe; it was splendidly

garnished with the king's plate; and the celebrated *nef* was not forgotten.

The *nef* is a piece of plate, of silver gilt, representing in shape the hull of a ship without masts and rigging: it is believed to have been originally given to one of the French Kings, by the city of Paris, for a ship is the principal object in its arms. In this vessel, beneath cushions wetted with perfumed water, are kept the napkins for the king's use. The *nef* is an indispensable article at all the royal repasts, and it must necessarily figure under the table. That which had belonged to the predecessors of Louis XVIII had disappeared in the great wreck of the monarchy: the good Marquis de Brézé had no rest till it was replaced by a new one, which was not perhaps quite conformable with the ancient designs, owing to the vanity of the goldsmith, and which M. de Dreux-Brézé had a good mind to reject as an illegitimate concession to modern taste.

However, as time pressed, the grand-master of the ceremonies was forced to take the *nef* as he found it. I was present, as a curious spectator, at all the preparations for the royal repast; having with me M. de Brézé who described things to me as they were executed.

In the first place the usher of the hall, having received orders from the grand-master of the

household, went to the door of the hall of the gardes-du-corps, and struck it with a cane, saying at the same time: *Gentlemen, to lay the king's table!* A guard followed him; they went together to the buttery, where each officer of the place took a piece of plate, and headed by the *nef*, all proceeded towards the gallery of Diana, where the table was set out, the *gardes-du-corps* marching beside the *nef*, and the usher pompously carrying the two table-cloths.

The bread, the wine, water, and toothpicks destined for the king's use were tried: the napkin was laid half hanging down, upon it was placed the plate, and the salver, on which were bread, spoon, knife, and fork. The same was done for every thing that the royal family was to use; and the usher, returning to the hall of the guards, again struck the door with his cane, saying: "*Gentlemen, to the king's dinner.*" Three guards and a brigadier with shouldered carbines, immediately repaired to the kitchen to escort the king's dinner; it was brought with not less pomp. I observed that every officer of the household, in passing the *nef*, saluted it with a low bow, and I remarked this to M. de Brézé.

"They would not omit that on any account," said he, rubbing his hands: "you must know that, according to the etiquette of the crown,

the princes and the princesses themselves ought to pay it that mark of respect; it is a custom consecrated by time which I took good care to re-establish; for the *nef* is entitled to the same veneration as the bed. You know that every one bows in passing that of his majesty. Nothing of the kind was ever done in what was called the household of Bonaparte: the truth is, that poor Count de Segur, with all his talents, was but a sorry grand-master of the ceremonies."

While M. de Brézé was ridiculing Count de Segur, the dishes arrived and were tasted, and the first *maître d'hôtel*, and the wine-taster, Count d'Escar, preceded by the usher of the hall, went to apprise the king that dinner was on table. His majesty, accompanied by his family, walked to the gallery of Diana, to the sound of music performed by the band of the chapel and of the opera—a singular association which has taken place at the palace on numerous occasions. The great officers preceded his majesty; Count d'Escar presented the napkin for washing, quite wet, and which had previously been tried by the officer of the battery—"agreeably to Article 27, of the regulation of Louis XIV, in 1681," said the Marquis de Brézé to me, quoting the very words, so sure was he of his point.

" If there should happen not to be any *maître*

d'hôtel to go and inform the king, the gentleman on duty shall perform his functions, and carry the wet napkin between two napkins of gold ; he shall return walking before the king, and present to his majesty that wet napkin for washing, having first caused it to be tried by the officer of the buttery. Thus was it fixed by Louis XIV on the 5th of September 1681."

I began to think the explanation of the marquis rather tedious : to amuse myself I fell to studying the figure made by the duchesses who were present, seated on their blessed stools. The old and the new *régime* were there confronted and reciprocally examining one another. M. Brézé presently fastened upon me again.

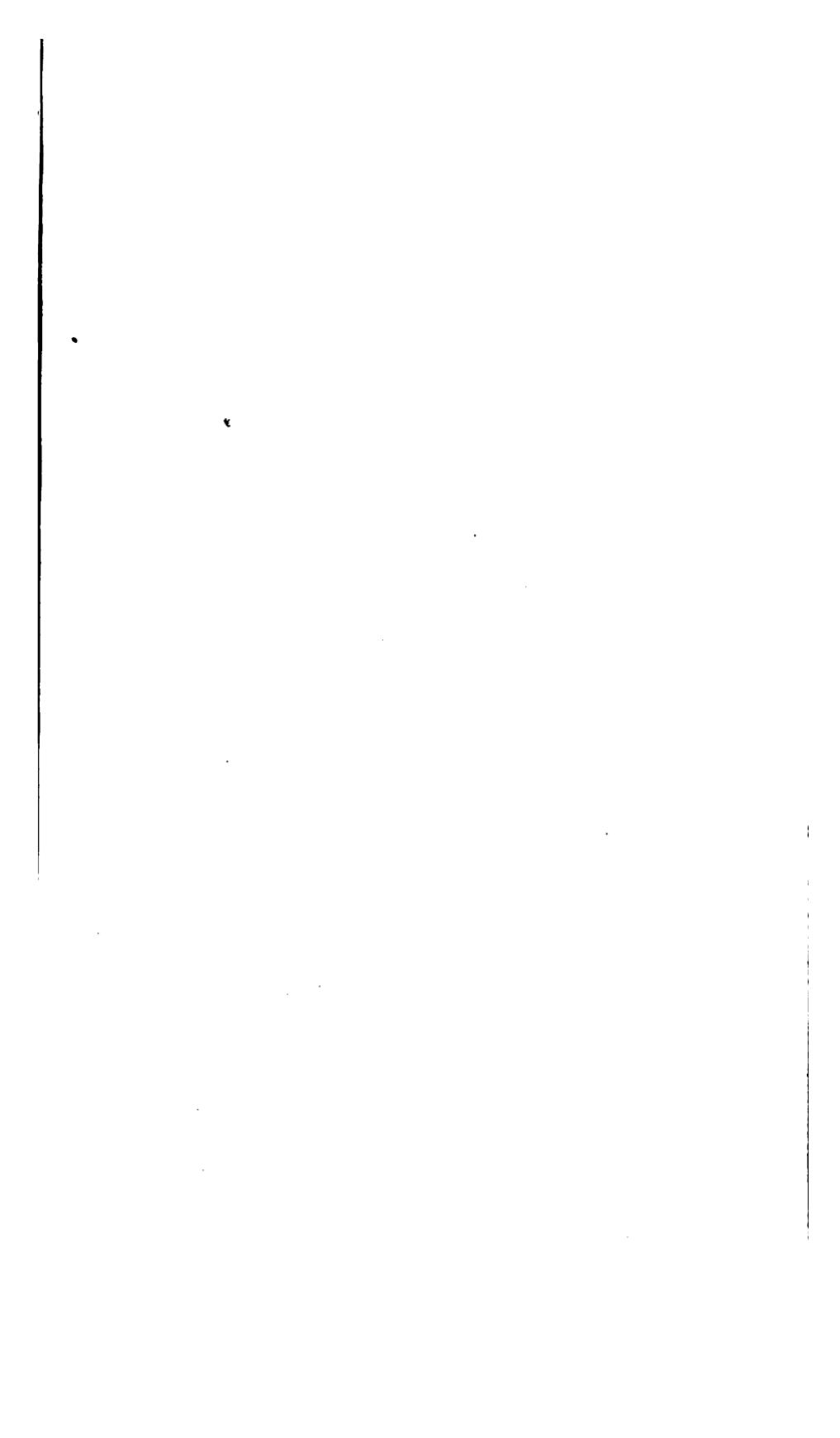
"Look," said he to me, "at the captain of the guards on duty ; he commands fourteen guards, who are placed seven on each side of the king's table, with shouldered carbines. Another stands sentinel by the *nef*, and there is another whose business it is to accompany the gentleman on duty whenever he goes to the buffet to fetch any thing for the king to drink : two *gardes de la manche* in all the magnificence of their costume and holding the partisan, stand behind the king, one on his right, the other on his left. The captain of the guards is behind his majesty, and the almoner in waiting keeps near the *nef* to hand out the napkins as they are wanted."

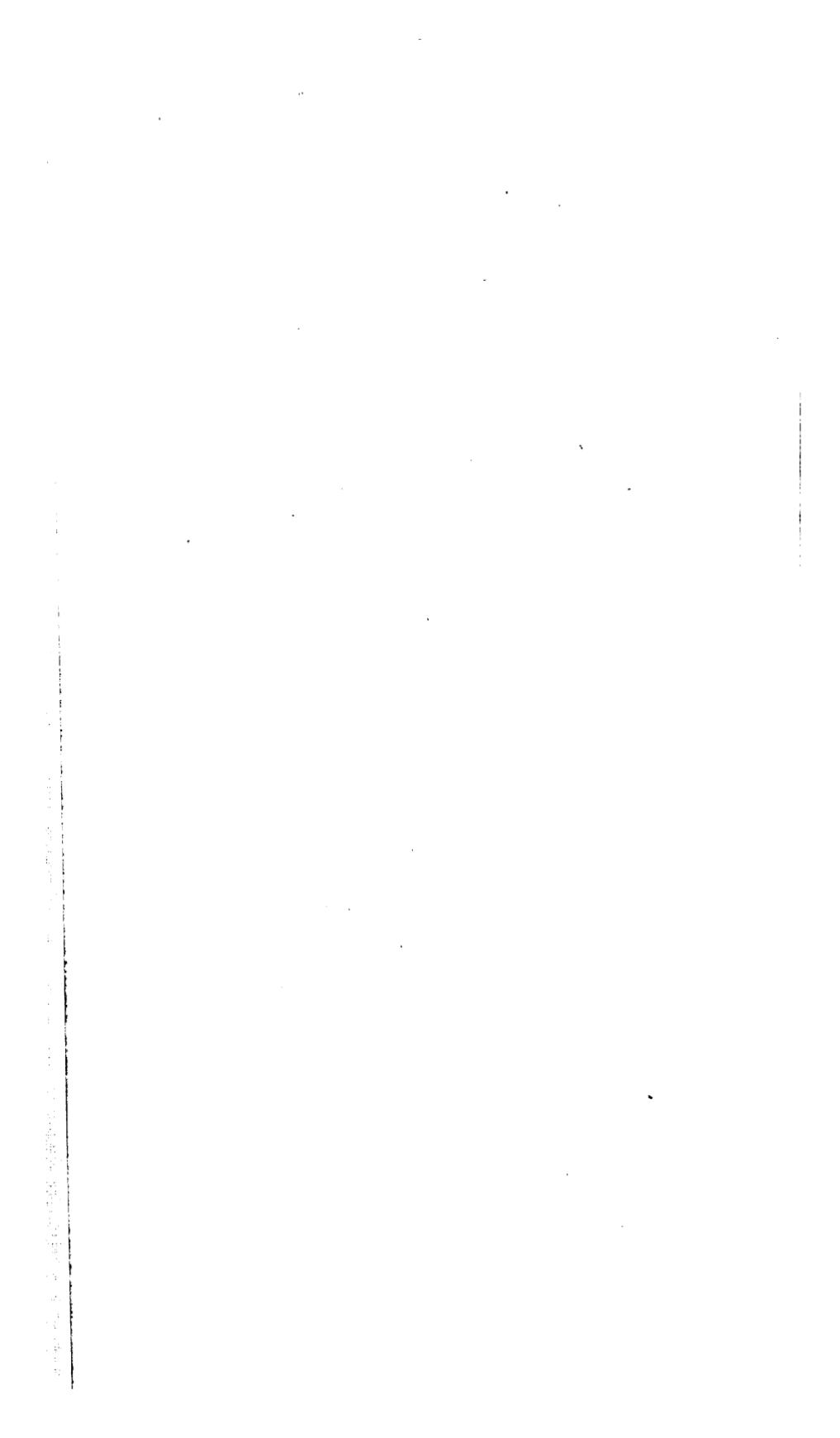
The marquis would have continued his kind explanations, when the king relieved me by calling M. de Brézé by a sign. He ran to his majesty, who, during the rest of the dinner, kept him near his person. I had then leisure to enjoy the magnificence of the sight, the splendour of the illumination, and the stupified look of the good citizens of Paris, put in possession again, after the lapse of so many years, of the right of being present at the king's dinner. From the air of delight which pervaded every face, you would have taken all the spectators for so many happy guests at the banquet. The king and his family had also that air of mingled grace and majesty which is peculiar to our Bourbons.

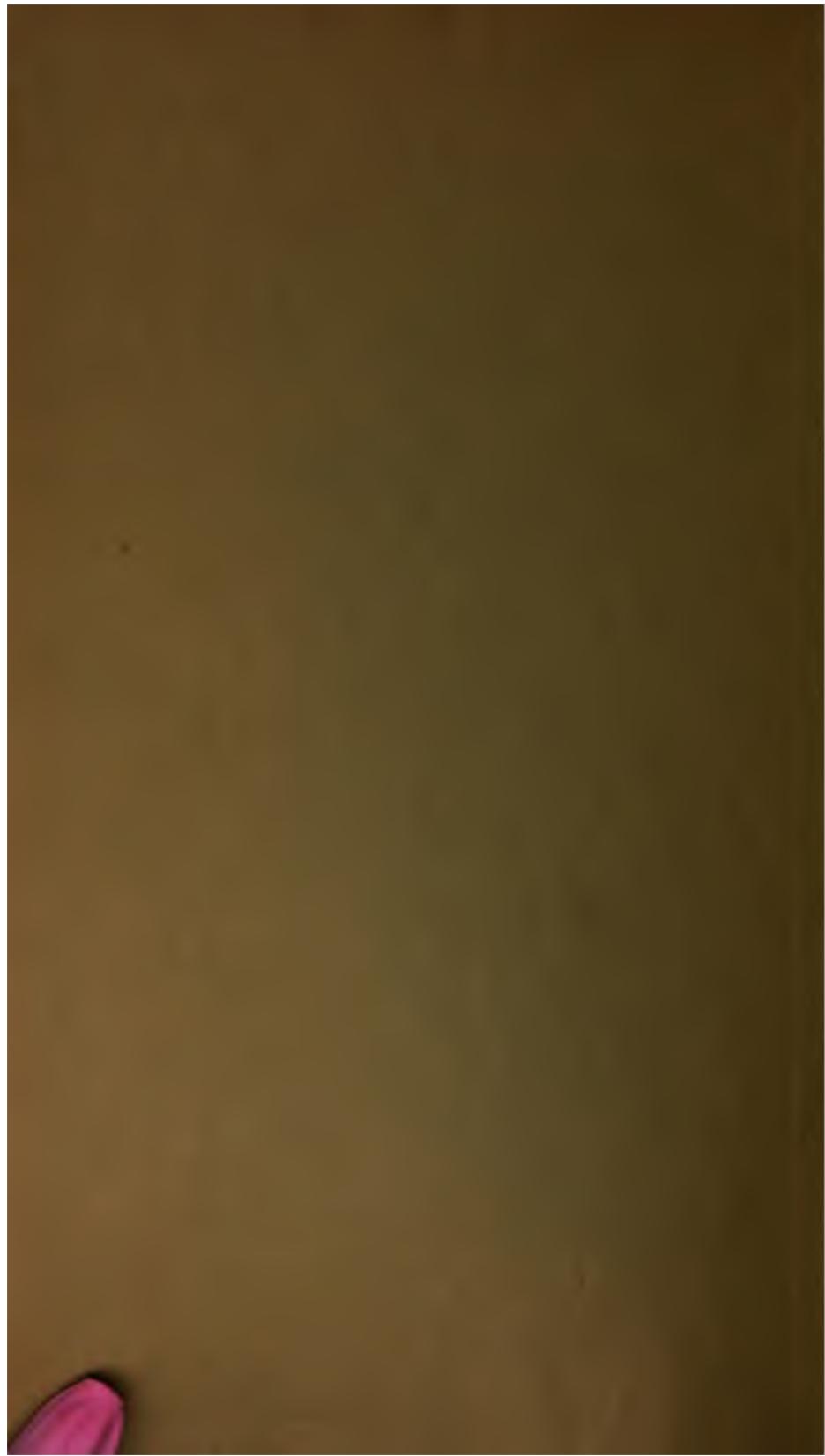
END OF VOL. I.

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1. *On the 1st of January, 1863, the President of the United States, by virtue of the power in him vested by the Constitution and the laws, to 'call forth the militia to suppress insurrections and repel invasions,' did, by a Proclamation, issue an order for the calling out of the militia of the State of Massachusetts, for the purpose of suppressing the rebellion against the Government of the United States, and for the protection of the persons and property of the inhabitants of the State of Massachusetts, and for the defense of the Federal Forts and other Federal property within the State.*

